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THE SECOND CONFERENCE OF
AL-FURQĀN ISLAMIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION
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CONTENTS

Foreword vii
Preface ix

PART ONE: THE PHYSICAL ASPECT

Arabic Papyri
Geoffrey Khan 1

L’emploi du parchemin dans les manuscrits islamiques: quelques remarques lminaires
François Déroche 17

Two New Sources on the Art of Mixing Ink
Ibrahim Chabbouh 59

The Use of Paper in Islamic Manuscripts as Documented in Classical Persian Texts
Taj Afshār 77

PART TWO: THE HUMAN ASPECT

Early Methods of Book Composition: al-Maqrīzī’s Draft of the Kitāb al-Khitat
Ayman Fu’ād Sayyid 93

Problems of Attribution in Historical and Geographical Works
Mohamed Bencherifa 103

The Human Element Between Text and Reader: the Ijāra in Arabic Manuscripts
Jan Just Witkam 123

Malikī Formularies and Legal Documents: Changes in the Manuscript Culture of the ‘Udāl (Professional Witnesses) in Morocco
Léon Buskens 137
FOREWORD

Since its establishment in 1989, Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation has been involved in activities to encourage research and study into the field of Islamic manuscripts, including surveying Islamic manuscripts throughout the world, handlisting, cataloguing and the publication of significant Islamic manuscripts. In addition the Foundation holds a bi-annual conference on a topic related to Islamic manuscripts. The first conference which coincided with the inauguration of the Foundation in 1991 highlighted the significance of Islamic manuscripts in a general sense (see The Significance of Islamic Manuscripts, Proceedings of the Inaugural Conference of Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1991, ed. J. Cooper, London, 1992 & Aḥammiyyat al-Makhtūḥat, Aʿmāl al-muʿtamar al-ʾiftitahī li-muʿāssasat Al-Furqān lil turāth al-islāmi, London, 1992).

The second conference was technical and concentrated on the science of manuscript production in the Islamic world. At this conference the technical aspect of the science of manuscript production known as “codicology” was dealt with by distinguished scholars at the conference held on 4-5 December 1993. This volume contains a selection of the papers from this conference.

Since this second conference, Al-Furqān Foundation has organised three training courses for cataloguers of Islamic manuscripts, in Cairo (January 1994), Istanbul (September 1994), and London (June 1995). The notes from the lectures given at these courses by prominent scholars will eventually be published as a handbook for the cataloguing of Islamic manuscripts.

We hope that the present volume and the handbook for cataloguing will offer a major contribution to the promotion of Islamic studies in general and Islamic manuscripts in particular.

No doubt these humble steps which have been taken by Al-Furqān Foundation would have not led to any success had we not enjoyed the Almighty God's grace and support in the first place.

Ahmed Zaki Yamani
The articles presented here constitute a selection of the many scholarly papers delivered at the conference. The final choice of contents has attempted to portray the wide-ranging nature of the material presented while remaining true to the specific theme of the conference, namely codicology and the study of manuscripts primarily qua manuscripts.

The material divides naturally into two sections. The first covers the purely physical aspect of Islamic manuscripts, including the materials from which they are made, how these materials are put together in manuscript form, and how the ink is made that is used for writing on them. The second section concerns the more human aspect of the transmission of manuscripts and how this aspect makes itself evident in the material form of the manuscripts.

Thus the first three papers deal predominantly with different physical aspects of the manuscript. The paper by Geoffrey Khan (Lecturer in Hebrew and Aramaic, Cambridge University) gives us a masterly summary of our current knowledge on what is probably the oldest form of Islamic manuscript, namely the papyri written in Arabic which date from as early as the 1st/7th century. After papyrus comes parchment: the paper by François Déroche (Director of Studies, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris) on parchment as a material for manuscripts — particularly the Qur'ān — goes into great detail in explaining the hitherto little understood intricacies of parchment manuscript production in the first few centuries of Islamic culture. The paper by Ibrahim Chabouh (General Secretary, al-Majma' al-Malaki al-Urduni, Amman) looks at another highly technical aspect of manuscript production: the techniques of making the ink that is used to write the text.

The paper by Trāj Afshahr (former Director, Tehran University Library) is in a sense a bridge between the two aspects mentioned above. His paper explores the references to paper in classical Persian literature and thus allows us to build up a picture of the history of paper, its different types, and the different methods used to manufacture it, as seen by the writers who actually used it.
The last four papers, i.e. those of the second section, take us away from the more technical aspects of manuscript production into the realm of the interaction between manuscript and author, or manuscript and reader, or even manuscript and society. The paper by Ayman Fu‘ād Sayyid (Executive Director, Dār al-Kutub, Cairo) suggests something of what can be learned about an individual author’s actual method of composition by studying earlier and later drafts of a text written by him, in this case the Kitāb al-Khitāt of al-Maqrīzī. The paper by Mohamed Bencherifa (Curator, Bibliothèque Générale, Rabat) addresses another problem commonly facing those dealing with manuscripts, namely how to identify the author of a text when key portions of it — particularly the title page(s) and/or the colophon — have been lost or damaged. The paper by Jan Just Witkam (Curator of Oriental Manuscripts, Leiden University Library) suggests how a detailed study of ijāzas in manuscripts — that is, testimonials to the right to transmit or teach a certain text that are often added to the manuscript itself — can help to build up a picture of the social and educational environment in which these manuscripts were produced. This theme of the interaction between manuscript and human environment is further developed in the paper by Léon Buskens (Lecturer in Islamic Law, Leiden University) on the changes in manuscript culture in Morocco which shows, as he himself points out, that “the study of books and manuscripts leads us inevitably to the study of the men and women who wrote, read and used those books and manuscripts.”

These, then, are the papers that have been chosen as representative of the Second Conference of Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation. We trust that they will not only stand as important contributions in themselves to the still nascent discipline of Islamic codicology, but also provide impetus and direction for future studies in the field.

Yasin Dutton
Oxford
May, 1995

ARABIC PAPYRI

GEOFFREY KHAN

For 4,000 years the main type of writing material used in Egypt was papyrus. This was usually referred to in Arabic as qirṭās, which was derived from the Greek khartēs via the Aramaic qartēs.1 Papyrus was manufactured from the plant Cyperus papyrus L, which is native to Egypt. It was easier to handle than the available alternatives, such as wood, skins and clay tablets, and could be made in a range of thicknesses and qualities. These factors no doubt contributed to its success.2 It is deceptive to judge the physical nature of papyrus by the brittle remains that have been preserved down to modern times. When manufactured, papyrus was light coloured, smooth, strong and flexible.3

Papyrus was in use as early as 3,000 BC and played a crucial role in the development of ancient Egyptian civilisation; indeed the papyrus plant became the symbol of Lower Egypt as far back as the predynastic period, in the 4th millennium BC.4 From at least the 1st millennium BC, papyrus had a rival in parchment, which was an excellent writing material. Papyrus, however, was easier to manufacture than parchment.5 Although parchment was widely used in other parts of the Classical world, papyrus retained its importance in Egypt throughout the Greek and Roman periods.6 The use of papyrus was taken over by the Arabs when they conquered Egypt in the 7th century AD, and it continued as

1 S. Fraenkel, Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen (Leiden, 1888), 245. As a writing material, papyrus was occasionally referred to as waraq al-bardī or waraq al-qasab; cf. R. Sellheim, s.v. “Kīrtās”, Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed (Leiden and London, 1960-), V, 173.

2 A. Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri (Cairo, 1952), 1.


6 Lewis, Papyrus in Classical Antiquity.
the main writing material of the country until the 10th century AD. By this time it could no longer compete with paper, which was cheaper to produce.

Unlike papyrus, the manufacture of paper was not dependent on raw material that was, for the most part, exclusive to Egypt. Paper was first manufactured in the Islamic world in Samarrqand, having been introduced there from China in the 2nd/8th century, and came into general use in the Eastern Islamic lands earlier than in the Western lands. In the reign of the caliph Harun al-Rashid (170/786–193/809) paper began to be used in government offices.7 Writing in the 9th century AD, al-Jahiz tells us that "the papyri of Egypt are for the West what the papers of Samarrqand are for the East (qarāṭis Miṣr li-l-maghrib ka-kawāghid Samarrqand li-l-mashriq)".8 Paper was used sporadically in Egypt in the 9th century but did not constitute a rival to papyrus until the 10th century. By the middle of the 10th century paper had supplanted papyrus in Egypt and the manufacture of papyrus had almost completely ceased.9 Ibn Hawqal, who visited Egypt in 359/969, mentions the papyrus plant but makes no reference to the use of papyrus in Egypt as a writing material.10 Writing in 375/985-6, al-Maqdisi mentions paper as one of the products of Egypt but does not refer to the manufacture of papyrus.11 From al-Mas’udi’s writing in 956 AD, however, we learn that papyrus manufacture was not completely defunct in Egypt in the 10th century, and it also appears that papyrus still had some marginal

7 Ibn Khaldūn, Kitāb al-Ibar (Būqāq, 1284 [1867]), I, 352; al-Maqrīzī, Kitāb al-Mawā’ir wa-l-tibīr bi-dhikr al-khitat wa-l-ithbār (Būqāq, 1270 [1853]), I, 91; al-Qalqashandi, Subh al-sāhā (Būqāq, 1903), I, 578; ibid (Caïro, 1331-18/1913-15), II, 475.
8 al-Tha’alibī, Latīf al-ma’ārif, ed. P. de Jong (Leiden, 1867), 97; cf. al-Suyūtī, Ḥusn al-mubādara (Būqāq, 1299 [1882]), II, 238. It is worth noting, however, that a document in the Khalifī collection from northern Mesopotamia which is datable to c. 240/854-5 is written on papyrus (see G. Khan, Arabic Papyri. Selected Material from the Khalifī Collection, Studies in the Khalifī Collection, I [London and Oxford, 1992], no. 6).
10 Ibn Hawqal, Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-mamalik, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1873), 86.
12 al-Mas’ūdī, Kitāb al-Tanbih wa-l-ışrāf, Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale, VIII (Paris, 1810), 146.

uses at this period, such as for amulets,13 or for medical treatment,14 although it was not the common writing material.

Further west in the Maghreb the transition to paper was even later. In this region parchments was the predominant writing material until the 11th century AD.15

We learn from Ibn Hawqal that in the second half of the 10th century papyrus was still used by the Arabs in Sicily for chancery correspondence,16 and some papyri found in Egypt were originally written elsewhere.17

During the long period of Egyptian history when papyrus was in use, the languages current in the country changed so that the surviving materials fall into the sphere of specialists in ancient Egyptian, Greek, Coptic and Arabic. By the time of the Arab conquest Egyptian had long been replaced by Greek and Coptic, which were soon replaced by Arabic in most contexts. Coptic continued to be used by the Egyptian Christians of the Monophysite rite, but Greek had fallen out of use by the 8th century AD; one vestige of its former importance was the use of Greek numerals in early accounts in Arabic.

Extant Arabic papyri

Grohmann estimated that there were approximately 16,000 Arabic papyri in the various collections that he was familiar with in Europe, North America and Cairo.18 This figure apparently refers only to moderately well-preserved documents. The total number of extant papyrus fragments containing Arabic writing is far higher.19 The vast majority are documents of some sort, while the minority contain literary texts. The first category includes accounts, legal deeds, administrative documents drawn up by government officials, and private letters. Some of the letters offer

15 Ibn Hawqal, al-Masālik wa-l-mamalik, 86.
16 e.g. Khan, Arabic Papyri, no. 6, an account which was drawn up in a Nestorian monastery in Mesopotamia c. 240/854-5.
17 Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri, 2.
18 See S. A. Hopkins, Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic, Based upon Papyri Datable to Before 300 AH/912 AD (Oxford, 1984), xli, n. 3.
intimate glimpses of everyday life in early Islamic Egypt. Others were written by merchants as part of their commercial activities and tell us a great deal about trade in the early Islamic period. As well as providing evidence for social and economic history, many of these documents supply material for other areas of study: hundreds of place names mentioned in the papyri add considerably to our knowledge of the topography of Egypt at this period, and papyrus letters and legal deeds furnish abundant primary source material for the study of Arabic diplomatics. In addition, both the literary and the documentary papyri are important sources for the study of the Arabic script and of the development of the Arabic language.

The literary papyri include the earliest known fragments of many works in Arabic, such as the biography of the Prophet Muhammad by Ibn Hishām, the Mawṣūla of Mālik b. Anas, the tales of the Arabian Nights and Arabic poetry. They also include parts of other works that were previously thought to have been lost, such as the compilation of traditions about the Prophet Muhammad and King David attributed to Wabh b. Munabbih and the collections of legal precedents of ‘Abd Allāh b. Wahb and ‘Abd Allāh b. Laḥta.21

Many medieval European papyri have been preserved in church and papal archives,22 but no archives containing such material in Arabic have survived. As a result, the only Arabic papyri that are now extant have been recovered from the ground, either as the result of chance finds or of official archaeological excavations. Many of them have been found in rubbish heaps on the edges of towns, where the residents have been discarding all sorts of waste, including papyri for which they no longer had any use, since antiquity. Other papyri were found in the ruins of ancient buildings, often preserved in sealed jars.23 It was in a jar of this type that Egyptian peasants discovered two Arabic papyri at Saqqārah in 1824; the discipline of Arabic papyrology was founded by the publication of these documents by the French scholar Silvestre de Sacy in 1825 and 1831.24

In the second half of the 19th century large numbers of Arabic papyri were found at various sites in the Fayyūm, as well as at sites lying further south, including al-Bahnās (Oxyrhynchus), al-Ushmānayn (Hermopolis Magna), Kom Eshqaw (Aphrodito), Ikhmīn (Panopolis), al-Gabalayn (Pathirīs), Edfu (Apollinopolis), Dandara and Aswan. Lower Egypt has proved far less productive, no doubt because the soil conditions are less conducive to the preservation of organic material. Nevertheless, several thousand pieces have been found in the ruins of Fustat.25

Most of the major collections of Arabic papyri consist of material originating from the sites in Upper Egypt. This applies to the collections in the National Library in Cairo, the Oriental Institute in Chicago, the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, the Staats-Universitäts-Bibliothek in Hamburg, the Institut für Papyrologie at Heidelberg University, the Louvre and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the British Library in London, the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, the Bodleian Library and Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the former collection of the Archduke Rainer in Vienna, and the Wessely Collection in Prague. Only a few collections contain material that originated predominantly from Fustat. These include the collections of Arabic papyri in the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo,27 the collection formerly in the possession of G. Michaelides of Cairo and now in Cambridge University Library, and the Khalili collection in London.

23 Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri, 8.
25 For more details of these discoveries, see Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri, 11, 214-7; idem, Einführung und Christomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde, 1, Einführung (Prague, 1954), 7-35.
26 Grohmann, Einführung und Christomathie, 36-62.
27 Ibid., 27.
Named discipline of Arabic papyrology was given a sound foundation by a series of masterly studies of selected papyri and paper documents from the Erzherzog Rainer collection by Karabacek. He also made short descriptions of 366 Arabic


29 The Saqqara documents were published in the following places: J. B. Silvestre, Paléographie universelle, 1, Peuples orientaux (Paris, 1839), 190-2; pl. 1; idem, Universal Palaeography (tr. into English with corrections and notes by F. Madden, London, 1850), 84ff, pl. xxix; W. Wright (ed), The Palaeographical Society, Facsimiles. Manuscripts and Inscriptions (Oriental Series) (London, 1877-83), pl. 5.

30 M. Champollion-Figeac, Chartes latines sur papyrus, du VIe siècle de l’ère chrétienne, appartenant à la Bibliothèque Royale (Paris, 1835), pl. 1.


32 J. von Karabacek: “Der Papyrusfund von El-Faijûn”, Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften: philosopisch-historische Classe [Vienna], XXXIII (1883), Erste Abtheilung, 207-42; “Eine merkwürdige arabische Namensunterschrift”, Mittheilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyri Erzherzog Rainer, I (Vienna, 1886), 246; “Das arabische Papier” [see n. 9 above], 87-178; “Neue Quellen zur Papiergeschichte”, Mittheilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyri Erzherzog
small corpus of the papyri from Berlin had been published earlier by Abel.39 Other monograph publications of miscellaneous documents from a single collection include those of Dietrich (Hamburg),40 Margoliouth (Manchester)41 and Khan (London),42 while Dietrich and, more recently, Diem have published volumes devoted to Arabic papyrus letters from the collections of Hamburg43 and Heidelberg44 respectively.

In 1901 a cache of papyri letters written by Qurra b. Sharik, the Umayyad governor of Egypt from 90-96/709–714, was discovered in the Upper Egyptian village of Kom El-Shqaw, 7 km south-west of Tīmā, formerly known as Aphroditos in the Greek sources. Some of these letters are written in Arabic, some in Greek, and some are bilingual (Arabic and Greek). They subsequently found their way into various papyrus collections. The Arabic and bilingual letters in the Heidelberg collection were published by Becker, who also brought together Arabic letters of Qurra b. Sharik from several different collections.45 Abbott edited the Arabic letters of this governor in the Oriental Institute of Chicago.46 Those in the Egyptian Library were included in Grohmann’s publication of papyri from that collection.47 A fragment of a letter from Qurra in St Petersburg was published by

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41 D. S. Margoliouth, Catalogue of Arabic Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester (Manchester, 1933).
42 G. Khan, Arabic Papyri (see n. 8 above); idem, Bills, Letters and Deeds. Arabic Papyri of the 7th to 11th Centuries, The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, VI (London and Oxford, 1993).
47 Grohmann, Arabic Papyri in the Egyptian Library, 146-163.
Jernstedt.48 More recently Rāghib has published Qurra letters that have been discovered in the Sorbonne.49 These letters of Qurra b. Sharik cast a great deal of light on the otherwise poorly documented Umayyad administration of Egypt.

Becker’s works on the Qurra papyri50 were the first publications to gather together papyri of the same type from various collections. The same approach was taken by Grohmann in his volume on protocol texts51 which, in addition to the material in the Rainer collection, also contains all the Arabic and bilingual protocols in other collections that were known to the author at the time of writing. Jahn made a study of formulae in Arabic letters and published a short corpus of Arabic papyrus letters from the collections in Vienna and Heidelberg.52 Rāghib has gathered together from various papyrus collections letters and documents from the archives of a family of merchants.53 Most recently a chrestomathy of Arabic papyri, based on material compiled by Grohmann and containing samples of many types of documents from various collections, has been published by Khoury.54 Furthermore, all known papyri written in Judeo-Arabic (i.e. Arabic in Hebrew script) have been assembled from various collections and published together by Blau and Hopkins.55

The analysis of the Arabic papyri documents in most of the aforementioned publications concentrates on details of their socio-economic setting, the background of personal names, the
identification of place names and comparisons with other extant documents with regard to certain words and phrases. The grammar of Arabic papyri has now been systematically examined by Hopkins,66 while Diem, in his recent volume of Arabic letters from Heidelberg, has contributed both to the study of the grammar and the formulaic phraseology employed.57

Several Arabic papyri have been discovered at sites outside Egypt: two Arabic papyri from Damascus are now in the Oriental Institute, Chicago;58 a small number were unearthed at Sāmara by the German excavations of 1911;59 thirteen Arabic papyri from the period 522/672-70/689 were discovered at ‘Awjil al-Hā’ir (Nessana), near Be‘er sheva, by the H. Duncombe Colt expedition of 1936-7;60 and a large number of papyri, most of which date from the first two centuries AH and nearly all of which are in a very fragmentary condition, were discovered in Khirbat al-Mird in the Judeae desert in the 1950s.61

The papyrus roll and its manufacture

Evidence concerning the cultivation of papyrus in antiquity comes from the accounts of Classical authors, who recorded that the plant was grown in plantations, many of which were located in the swampy areas of the Delta.62 Moreover, two extant Greek papyri from the early Roman period — one of 13-14 BC and the other of 5 BC — contain leases of papyrus plantations.63 It is presumed that this type of cultivation in plantations was continued during the first few centuries after the Arab conquest of Egypt in 640 AD, although we have no direct evidence for this. We also know from Classical sources that papyrus grew in Mesopotamia, along the Euphrates,64 and this was apparently still the case in the early Arab period. Papyrus plants were also cultivated in Sicily well into the Middle Ages, but according to Ibn Hawqal most of the papyrus grown there was used to make cordage for ships, and the small amount of writing material that was produced was for the exclusive use of the sultan.65

Arabic sources, such as Abū Sāliḥ and al-Ya‘qūbi, mention numerous papyrus mills that were active in Egypt in the early Islamic period,66 as well as one in Sāmara67 which was established by the caliph al-Mu’tasim in 221/836.67 Egyptian papyrus mills were also mentioned in the Arabic protocols placed at the beginning of papyrus rolls.68

A systematic description of the manufacture of papyrus in Classical antiquity was given by Pliny the Elder,69 who reported that the strips were laid on boards moistened with water from the Nile, whose mud content served as a binder.70 Modern analysis of ancient papyrus has revealed that the strips were held together by the natural gummy substance contained in the cell sap of the papyrus pith and released when the plant cells were crushed, and the Nile water appears to have had no agglutinative function at all.71 The papyrus was dried and then rubbed smooth with a piece of ivory or a shell, and, as the final stage in the process, a

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56 Hopkins, Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic [see n. 19 above].
57 Diem, Arabische Briefe.
59 E. Hertzfeld, Erster vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen von Samaara (Berlin, 1912), pl. xxxvi b.
61 A selection was published by Gromann, Arabic Papyri from Kharbat el-Mird (Leuven, 1963). For the literary papyri, see the publications of Abbott and Khoury referred to above (nn. 20 and 21).
62 e.g. Theophrastus, Historia Plantarum, ed. F. Wimmer (Leipzig, 1854), IV. xviii. 3; Strabo, Geographica, ed. G. Kramer (Berlin, 1852), XVII. i. 15; Pliny, Naturalis Historia, ed. C. Mayhoff (Leipzig, 1875), XII. xxii. 71.
63 Ägyptische Urkunden aus den königlichen Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden, IV (Berlin, 1904-12), nos. 1121, 1180.
64 Pliny, Naturalis Historia, XIII. xxii. 73. The papyrus plant seems to have been introduced into Mesopotamia by the Seleucids in the 3rd century BC, probably because of the interruptions in the supply from Egypt; see Lewis, Papyrus in Classical Antiquity, 11.
65 Ibn Hawqal, al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik, 86.
67 al-Ya‘qūbi, al-Buldān, 39; idem, Türākh, ed. M. T. Houtsma (Leiden, 1883), II. 577.
68 e.g. Gromann, Protokolfe, nos. 116, 140, 162, 204.
69 Pliny, Naturalis Historia, XIII. xxii. 74 - xxvi. 82.
70 ibid, XIII. xxii. 77.
71 Lewis, Papyrus in Classical Antiquity, 47-9.
mallet was used to beat flat any remaining puckers, ridges or similar imperfections in the surface. Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, XIII. xxv. 81.

The only description of the manufacture of papyrus in the Arabic sources is by Abū al-‘Abbas al-Nabāṭī, who died in 637/1239 and, therefore, lived in a period long after papyrus had ceased to be produced. According to al-Nabāṭī, the Egyptians of former times split the stalk of the papyrus into two halves and cut the pith vertically into strips. The strips were laid out side by side on a smooth piece of wood, and a second row of strips was laid over them at right angles. Unlike Pliny, al-Nabāṭī referred explicitly to the use of an artificial adhesive (*Ηοταύτα*). He recorded that the two layers of papyrus were pressed together and stuck with an agglutinative substance produced by dissolving seeds of the blue lotus (*Nymphaea caerulea* Sav.) in water. When dry, the sheet was beaten with a wooden beetle until all roughness was removed from it.

The size of papyrus sheets varied considerably in the Arab period. Grohmann has found that they ranged in width from 12.7 cm to 37 cm, and in height from 30 cm to 58 cm. Similar variations were found in the width and height of papyri in antiquity.

In the Arab period, as in the Classical period, different qualities of papyrus were produced. The Romans had terms for these - *charta emporitica* (commercial papyrus) for rough sheets not suitable for writing and used for wrapping merchandise, and *Augusta and Liviana* for extremely thin varieties. An inferior type of papyrus corresponding to *charta emporitica* appears to have been used in the Arab period, for there are a number of references in Arabic papyri to the use of papyrus sheets for wrapping items such as jewels, medicine and garments. Some

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72 Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, XIII. xxv. 81.
73 The description was included by al-Nabāṭī’s pupil Ibn al-Bayār in his *Jami‘*, (I. 87).
76 See Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, XIII. xxiii. 74, 76. Isidore of Seville (*Origines*, ed. W. M. Lindsay [Oxford, 1911], VI, 10) reports slightly different names for these grades of papyrus: *emporetica*, *Augustea* and *Libyana*.
77 Khan, *Arabic Papyri*, 149.

Arabic official documents are written on particularly fine papyrus. Papyrus was not sold by the manufacturer as separate sheets but the sheets were pasted together to form a roll. One reason for this may have been that papyrus tended to fray at the edges. The vertical edges of sheets are particularly liable to damage by handling. In a roll these edges were eliminated. The sheets overlapped at the joins by varying amounts, usually about 2 cm in both the Greek and the Arab period. The right edge of each sheet covered the left edge of the following sheet. Any roughness in the joins was smoothed down with the result that they did not offer any obstacle to the pen and were barely visible. On the inside surface facing inwards the papyrus fibres ran parallel to the length of the roll (i.e. its long axis). This arrangement was designed to minimise the chance of fibres coming apart. The vertical fibres on the outside are bent away from each other when rolled. If they were on the inside they would be pushed against one another and liable to spring loose. Moreover, if the horizontal fibres were on the outside the sheet joins would be subjected to strain when the roll was rolled up and the ends of the fibres liable to fray.

The scribe wrote on the protected inside of the roll. If there was cause to write on both sides, the inside of the roll was always written on first. We may, therefore, refer to the inward facing side as the recto and the outward facing side as the verso. When a piece was cut off the roll for a document or letter the scribe likewise wrote on the side that was originally inside the roll. In the Arab period nearly all the extant documents on the recto of the papyrus were written perpendicular to the fibres. That the side in question was the inside of the roll is shown by the fact that any joins of sheets that occur in the extant documents are parallel with the lines of writing. The practice of writing documents across the fibres is found in papyrus since antiquity.

Largely documents had the form of *rotuli*, i.e. rolls that are unrolled vertically. Literary texts, on the other hand, were usually written on the roll in columns, with the lines running parallel with the fibres and perpendicular to the joins of the sheets. This type of roll was read horizontally. In the Byzantine period there was an increasing use of the codex for literary texts, and in the Arab period most of the extant papyri containing Arabic literary texts
are also leaves from codices. However, the papyrus roll in Heidelberg containing the collection of traditions of ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahiʿa is written in the form of a rotulus.

The reason why documents were written across the fibres may have been to economise on papyrus. If the scribe wrote a short document along the fibres and cut it from the roll he would be likely to leave an awkward shape at the end of the roll.81

In both the Greek and Arab periods the first sheet of the roll was preceded by a preliminary sheet (protokollon) which, when attached, was turned back to front so that its fibres were vertical on the inside surface of the roll. In other words the fibres of the preliminary sheet were perpendicular to the fibres of the sheets in the rest of the roll. The purpose of this was to prevent the fibres of the first sheet from fraying.82

The inner side of this preliminary sheet bore a text known as the protocol. This was written in Greek, following the Byzantine tradition, until 74/693–4 or 75/694–5, when, at the instance of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik, bilingual (Greek and Arabic) protocols were introduced, and from the time of the caliph Hisham (reg. 724–43 AD) texts in Arabic alone were placed in this position. The Arabic protocols contained the basmala: various religious formulae, including the Quranic verses 3:173, 9:33 and 9:61, and a prayer for the Prophet (tasliya); the names of the current caliph, the governor of Egypt or the head of the provincial treasury or both, and sometimes those of other high-ranking officials; and the name of the place where the papyrus was produced and often also the name of the supervisor of the papyrus mill. It appears that the manufacture of the papyrus mill was a state monopoly in the Arab period, as it was in pre-Islamic Egypt, and the function of the protocol texts was to certify that a roll was produced by a state papyrus mill and so to protect the monopoly.83

All the extant protocol texts in Arabic were written with thick strokes, possibly produced by a brush, and in some of the later protocols coloured inks were used for parts of the text. The protocol sheet was sometimes cut off the roll, and the reverse reused for other texts.

The protocol sheet, which was, of course, wrapped around the outside of the papyrus roll, was generally made of thicker papyrus than the other sheets. Sometimes rolls were given the additional protection of parchment wrappers or were stored in receptacles of a hard material such as glass or clay. We learn from Pliny that in the Roman period a papyrus roll consisted of 20 sheets,84 and this also appears to have been the case in the Arab period. Papyrus was sold either in complete rolls or in sections constituting one sixth of the roll. Such sections were known in Arabic as tumār, from Greek tongarion. The length of segments of papyrus shorter than a 20-sheet roll were usually expressed as multiples or fractions of a tumār.85 Sometimes a small segment was referred to simply as qit‘at qirṭaš (“a piece of papyrus”).

Most Arabic papyri were written with a split reed pen (qalam). This had the same form as the Roman calamus, from which it derived its name. In some papyri the split reed has left a double line in the strokes of the letters. Occasionally the papyri bear an exceedingly thick script which must have been written with another type of instrument, possibly a bulrush cut on a slant or a brush. The ink was usually made from soot and is black in colour, but one sometimes finds a rusty-brown ink, which was presumably made from gallnuts.86

Papyrus was relatively expensive. A roll could cost as much as one and a half dinārs in the 9th century AD, a time when one dīnār was the annual rent of a faddān of arable land or of a shop, for example. As a result, most people took pains to use papyrus economically, and the blank verso of a sheet was frequently used to write another text. Sometimes this second text had no relationship to the text on the recto, but on occasion the addressee of a letter used the blank verso to write his reply, although this was considered to be impolite. When the caliph al-Muʿtasim received a letter from the Byzantine emperor, for example, he had his reply written on the reverse, clearly with the intention of expressing his contempt for the emperor. The authors of replies written on the verso of the original letter often felt obliged to

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80 See references cited in note 21, p. 4 of this article.
82 ibid, 21.
83 Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri, 39–42.
84 Pliny, Naturalis Historia, XIII. xxiii. 77.
85 Grohmann, From the World of Arabic Papyri, 43–4.
86 ibid, 62–8.
apologise, and in doing so they usually employed the formula
*i'dhirmi fi al-qārūs* (*forgive me concerning the papyrus*).

In this paper I have given a brief survey of the growth of the
discipline of Arabic papyrology and a description of various
codicological aspects of Arabic papyri. I have made only fleeting
reference to the importance of such papyri for the study of Arabic
script, language and history.

In most respects Arabic papyrology is still relatively
undevolved. Its potential has certainly not been realised to the
same extent as Greek papyrology. Thousands of Arabic papyri
that have been preserved in the various collections remain
unpublished. It is clearly a desideratum for these texts to be made
available in published editions and for them to be granted the
scholarly attention they deserve.

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**L’EMPLOI DU PARCHemin**

**DANS LES MANUSCRITS ISLAMIQUES**

**Quelques remarques liminaires**

**FRANÇOIS DÉROCHE**

Jusqu’au moment où le papier s’imposa de manière absolue, le
parchemin (en arabe: *rqq*, *rmq*; également *jld*) occupa aux côtés
du papyrus une position privilégiée dans la fabrication des
manuscrits; on ne le cantonna certes pas dans ce seul emploi,
comme le montrent les nombreux documents sur parchemin que
l’on inclut traditionnellement dans le domaine de la papyrologie
arabe — mais dont nous ne parlerons pas dans le cadre de cet
exposé, consacré au livre. En dépit de son ancienne suprématie, il
reste comparativement peu de vestiges de cette production, ce qui
explique peut-être notre relative ignorance quant à la façon dont
ce matériau fut mis en œuvre par les copistes, mais aussi par les
relieurs musulmans. Afin de pouvoir un jour écrire l’histoire du
parchemin dans le monde islamique, les codicologues devront
explorer le matériau conservé dans les bibliothèques afin d’étudier
ses divers emplois: l’observation des pratiques liées à l’utilisation
de ce matériau au cours des âges et dans l’ensemble du monde
musulman permettra de jeter les bases de cette histoire. Le cas
échéant, on combinerá ces résultats avec les données textuelles —
dont l’interprétation demeure bien souvent délicate — et avec les
informations que pourraient fournir les analyses physico-
chimiques de parchemins anciens. Enfin la comparaison avec ce
que l’on sait de la fabrication et de l’utilisation de ce matériau par
d’autres communautés (en Espagne ou au Moyen-Orient par
exemple) permettra éventuellement de mieux comprendre certains
processus ou de mieux poser les problèmes. Il importe en tout
cas de prendre conscience que l’examen minutieux des manuscrits
eux-mêmes constitue une étape indispensable pour appréhender la façon dont le parchemin fut utilisé dans le domaine du livre.  

Les exigences de ce vaste programme de recherches sont actuellement loin d'être satisfaites et les lignes qui suivent posent sans doute plus de questions qu'elles n'en résolvent: l'expérience que nous avons est en effet limitée à quelques centaines de manuscrits ou fragments de manuscrits, principalement des Corans, dont la provenance fait l'objet de discussions. Aussi, sauf exception, les implications géographiques de certaines de nos observations restent-elles obscures. On tentera donc plutôt de présenter une série d'études de cas à travers lesquelles on pourra analyser les emplois du parchemin dans une perspective chronologique, après un court rappel sur l'histoire et la technique de fabrication de ce matériau subjectible.

**LE PARCHEMIN: ORIGINES, PRÉPARATION ET CARACTÉRISTIQUES**

En dépit du nom qu'il porte dans plusieurs langues, le parchemin n'a pas été "inventé" au 1er s. avant JC à Pergame. Il semble qu'il ait été connu et utilisé en Orient de longue date, peut-être dès le début du 1er millénaire avant JC. En dépit de son apparente simplicité, la technique de fabrication du parchemin pose des problèmes si l'on en juge par les divergences d'interprétation que l'on constate dans la littérature spécialisée; il nous paraît cependant indispensable d'évoquer ce processus pour mieux comprendre l'utilisation de ce matériau. Qu'est-ce que le parchemin? Selon la définition d'un lexique de codicologie élaboré principalement à partir de données relatives à l'Europe, c'est une "peau d'animal épilée et effleurée ayant subi un traitement non tannant (ou très peu tannant) puis un séchage sous tension la rendant propre à recevoir l'écriture sur ses deux faces".

La matière première est donc d'origine animale: le mouton, la chèvre, le veau, peut-être l'âne et, selon une tradition fortement enracinée, la gazelle. Comme on le verra plus loin, les textes paraissent indiquer que la peau de mouton était celle que l'on d'écriture sur les deux côtés de la peau n'est pas un critère suffisant; de l'autre, des produits d'apparence voisine peuvent être le résultat de procédés de fabrication très différents (voir ci-dessous, n. 16).


employpait le plus communément. Pour le IVᵉ/Vᵉ s., le Calendrier de Cordoue donne cependant une indication intéressante: au mois de mai, lit-on, “on fait du parchemin avec de la peau de faon et de gazelle jusqu’à la fin du mois de juillet”.

7 La peau des animaux sauvages passe pour être de meilleure qualité que celle des animaux domestiques, ce critère technique pourrait expliquer ce choix qui ne va pas toutefois sans poser de sérieux problèmes économiques si l’on réfléchit à la quantité de peaux nécessaires à la confection de manuscrits un peu épais. On pourrait également penser que la dénomination “peau de gazelle” fait plutôt référence à une certaine qualité de parchemin, comme le français velin; une indication rencontrée dans le Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes de Dozy (2ᵉ éd., Leiden/Paris, 1927) nous y invite: on y apprend en effet que raqq ḍhazāl signifie “parchemin vierge, la peau préparée des petits chèvres ou agneaux morts nés”. Parmi les traités de Ḳibṣa qui nous donnent quelques indications fugitives sur les techniques employées, celui d’ Ibn ʿAbdūn, rédigé en Espagne vers la fin du Vᵉ/XIᵉ s. ou au début du VIᵉ/XIIᵉ, recommande de ne pas utiliser pour la préparation du parchemin “des peaux de moutons maigres”; on en déduira que le mouton était l’animal le plus employé et que les parcheminiens savaient que l’état de santé de l’animal déterminait la qualité du parchemin: une bête sous-alimentée fournit une peau fine et faible au grain inégal, avec éventuellement des marques laissées par les os.

Pour l’art, certains artisans devaient être moins scrupuleux — ce qui justifiait ce rappel à l’ordre. Il est en principe possible d’identifier l’animal dont la peau a été utilisée pour faire du parchemin après la disposition de la racine des poils observables sur le produit fini; mais bien souvent le traitement, il s’agit d’un peu énergique, a fait disparaître ces traces. Faute d’identification...
quant à elle connue dans les communautés juives médiévales du Moyen-Orient. La craie était-elle employée pour éliminer la graisse? Nous n'avons pas d'indication à ce sujet dans les textes. On a observé en revanche sur des feuilles de Corans copiés en écriture hijazi (et donc datables de la fin du 9e/15e ou du début du 10e/16e s.) la présence d'une couche crayeuse qui pourrait correspondre à cette opération, à moins que ce procédé n'ait visé à donner une apparence plus homogène que deux côtés des feuilles. Reed mentionne l'emploi de craie ou de plâtre pour contrôler le séchage de la peau mise sous tension.

Du côté chair de la peau, l'écharron permettait d'éliminer avec un outil (une lame, par ex.) les résidus de chair et de graisse; le texte d'Ibn 'Abdun semble insister sur ce point: "on ne doit apprêter que du parchemin raclé" — à moins qu'il ne mette l'accent sur la phase suivante, celle de la finition. Après lui, 'Umar al-Garsifi (début du 11e/17e s.) reviendra sur ce sujet:

Collegium Annual, LV (1985), 47-50). Outre un texte souvent invoqué de Maimonide (Mishne Tora, II Hilchot tephillin 6-7), M. Haran cite un responsa du même Maimonide où figurent les noms de ces produits, mais il lit qash, là où l'on trouve qar dans le texte édité par Blau (J. Blau, R. Moses ben Maimon Responsa (Jerusalem, 1957-60), 1, 268, 1, 7, pour les textes arabes et hébreux). La littérature arabe ne paraît pas avoir conservé de trace de cette technique, et si la racine qash offre un sens raisonnable, il n'existe pas d'attestation d'un mot qash désignant une variété de parchemin dans les dictionnaires consultés (on retrouvera en revanche cette racine à propos du palimpseste: voir n. 94). La technique serait pourtant ancienne: avant Maimonide, qui vécut en Égypte au XIIe s., elle est visée par un responsa antérieur, daté du IXe s., à une époque où le parchemin était encore produit couramment. Au terme de son étude, M. Haran reconstitue ainsi le procédé arabe de fabrication du raqq et du qash (i) la peau était salée pendant 2 ou 3 jours; (ii) elle était alors plongée dans un bain d'eau et de chaux; (iii) après cela, on la séchait sous tension sur des cadres de bois et le poil qui subsistait était alors éliminé; c'est également au cours de cette étape que raqq et qash étaient séparés ("Bible Scrolls", 48-9). Comme on le voit, à l'exception de la dernière étape, le processus est en fait très voisin de celui que l'on connaissait en Europe. Ajoutons que nous n'avons pas pu vérifier l'existence, dans nos manuscrits, de parchemin obtenu par division de la peau.

17 Haran, "Technological Heritage", 36; idem, "Bible Scrolls", 36-7.

18 Dreibholz, "Der Fund von San'ā", 301. Un examen microscopique réalisé récemment sur le ms Paris, BN Arabe 3935 semble indiquer la présence d'un traitement de la surface du parchemin par application d'un produit dont la nature reste à déterminer.

19 Reed, Ancient Skins, 147.

20 Lévi-Provençal, Documents arabes, 59 (texte arabe) = Séville musulmane, 133, n° 219 (traduction).

18 "le muhtasib surveillera particulièrement les papetiers; … il en sera de même pour les parcheminiers quant au choix de la peau: celle-ci sera uniformément raclée et nettoyée". Il n'est pourtant pas sûr que, dans le monde islamique, on ait ensuite procédé à un ponçage méthodique de la peau, de manière à faire disparaître la différence entre les deux côtés. La phase essentielle du traitement consistait à laisser sécher la peau tendue sur des cadres; il fallait de l'espace que des parcheminiers andalous trouvaient dans les allées des cimetières, si bien qu'Ibn 'Abdun doit rappeler qu'"il ne faut pas qu'on étende sur le sol même des allées (s. du cimetière) des objets malpropres, tels que les peaux des tanneurs et des parcheminiers".

A en juger par les manuscrits sur parchemin qui ont été conservés, la plus grande diversité existe en ce qui concerne la qualité du parchemin. Celle-ci dépend de plusieurs facteurs que nous énumérons brièvement. Comme on peut l'imaginer, les différentes espèces animales utilisées ne donnent pas des peaux de qualité identique; deux bêtes de la même espèce et de la même race ne donneront pas forcément des peaux de même qualité puisque, comme on l'a déjà observé, l'état de l'animal — et plus particulièrement de sa peau — a une incidence sur le produit fini. Des blessures, des piqûres ou des coups reçus antérieurement à l'abattage ont laissé leurs marques sur la peau qui peut avoir été également abîmée par endroits au cours de la préparation: ces diverses lésions laisseront des traces sur le parchemin, généralement sous forme de trous de forme circulaire ou ovale. À l'occasion, on a tenté de remédier à cela en cousant les deux lèvres du trou. Dans le MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN) Arabe 6095, une fine membrane parcheminée a été collée sur les trous qu'il fallait dissimuler, par ex. aux ff. 3, 5, 28. Lors de la préparation de la peau, les tensions auxquelles elle est soumise
peuvent faire apparaître des zones translucides que l'on appelle yeux, comme c'est le cas au f. 47 du MS BN Arabe 6090.54
Indépendamment de ces accidents, un autre facteur dont il faut tenir compte est la qualité du travail de préparation du parchemin lui-même: l'artisan peut en effet avoir travaillé avec plus ou moins de soin ou de vigueur. Comme on l'a déjà vu, les parcheminiers ne semblent pas avoir veillé à éliminer la différence d'aspect entre les côtés poil (ou fleur) et chair: le second est plus blanc que le premier, qui laisse au toucher une impression de "velouté". L'encre accroute plus facilement le côté poil: on le remarque particulièrement bien dans des exemplaires du Coran copiés dans l'une ou l'autre des écritures abissides anciennes de grand module.55 En tenant le manuscrit ouvert de manière à rendre simultanément apparentes les marges de plusieurs feuillets consécutifs, la différence apparaît d'ordinaire aisément.56 Le côté fleur a parfois conservé des indices plus explicites: les poils se maintiennent plus facilement sur le pourtour des trous dont nous avons signalé l'existence précédemment et sur les bords de la peau; on en voit un exemple dans le MS Paris, BN Arabe 6095, au f. 39 v°.57 Il arrive que le travail d'épilation ait été mené de manière imparfaite et que des poils subsistent en des endroits en principe moins difficiles à traiter que ceux qui viennent d'être mentionnés. Sur plusieurs manuscrits maghrébins, comme les MSS Paris, BN Arabe 59358 ou 6090,59 la racine des poils est encore apparente, affleurant la surface du parchemin. Du côté chair, l'outil utilisé au cours de l'opération d'écharrure a pu laisser des traces, par ex. au f. 17 du MS Paris, BN Arabe 6095.50 S'il existe des parchemins de qualité médiocre, il en est d'autres qui sont remarquablement fins: le MS Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye 27,51 a été copié sur un parchemin dont les deux côtés ont été très minutieusement préparés, si bien qu’ils ne présentent pratiquement pas de différence. La façon dont la peau est utilisée pour former les cahiers du manuscrit donne également lieu à des variations dont on verra plus loin quelques exemples.
Les dimensions du parchemin sont naturellement déterminées par celles de l'animal dont la peau a été utilisée; comme on le comprend bien, il existe des différences entre les espèces utilisées, mais aussi entre les individus d'une même espèce. Plus que des dimensions minimales, qui ne présentent guère d'intérêt,52 nous signalerons, à titre d'exemple, un manuscrit et un document qui paraissent indiquer les limites supérieures de la taille des parchemins. Les fragments du Coran, MS Paris, BN Arabe 324 comportent des feuillets abondamment rognes qui mesurent 537 x 620 mm.53 Un document conservé à Londres, British Library Or. 4684/III, atteint 850 x 820 mm.54

24 E. Blochet, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes des nouvelles acquisitions (1884–1924) (Paris, 1925), 184; Déroche, FIMMOD, no 68.
26 Il faut, pour que l'expérience soit probante, éviter le milieu des cahiers ou encore le premier et dernier feuillets de deux cahiers contigus (voir plus bas).
27 Voir n. 23.
29 Voir n. 24.
30 Voir n. 23.
32 Grohmann, Arabische Paläographie, I, 111.
34 Grohmann, Arabische Paläographie, I, 111.
Avant d'être utilisé par le copiste, le parchemin pouvait être teint; comme on sait, cette pratique était bien connue dans le bassin de la Méditerranée.\textsuperscript{35} Il est inutile de revenir sur le plus célèbre manuscrit islamique copié sur du parchemin teint, le fameux Coran bleu;\textsuperscript{36} les artisans musulmans avaient à leur disposition d'autres coloris, comme le bleu, le brun, le jaune ou le brun.\textsuperscript{37} La spécificité du parchemin explique que l'on ait également connu des encre de couleur d'un emploi réservé au parchemin: Ibn Bâdis en signale une dorée, mais aussi une autre, bleue.\textsuperscript{38}

À la différence du papyrus dont la production est circonscrite aux quelques régions bien définies où le Cyperus papyrus L. peut pousser, le parchemin peut en principe être fabriqué en n'importe quel endroit, puisque la matière première est pratiquement disponible en tout lieu et que la technique est relativement simple. C'était là un avantage important: les utilisateurs ne dépendaient pas d'un approvisionnement venu d'une contrée éloignée par des routes que les circonstances politiques ou économiques pouvaient interrompre. Il est vrai que certaines villes étaient réputées pour la qualité du parchemin qu'on y fabriquait et il est permis de penser que ces produits étaient recherchés: Kûfa ou Edessa (al-Ru'ah) jouissaient d'une réputation flatteuse en ce domaine.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{35} Selon Bilbal, "Membrana", col. 598, l'Antiquité connaissait le parchemin teint en jaune: il cite à cet effet Isidore de Séville, "fiebant autem coloris lutei", qui mentionne en outre du parchemin teint en pourpre: "membrana autem aut candida aut lutea aut purpurea sunt" (San Isidoro de Sevilla, Etimologías, texto latino, version espagnole y notas por J. Oroz Reta y M.-A. Marcos Casquero, Introduccion general por M. C. Diaz y Diaz (Madrid, 1982-3), I, 386-9 (= VI. xi. 2-5). Bilbal a remarqué dans la collection des fragments copiés sur parchemin de la bibliothèque de l'Université d'Heidelberg des exemples de coloration en jaune. Les exemples byzantins — qui ont pu influencer la production en Terre d'Islam — sont mieux connus (voir par ex. l'anecdote rapportée par Grohmann, Arabische Paläographie, I, 111).


\textsuperscript{37} Pour un exemple de teinture orangée, voir ibid, 58, n° 11.


\textsuperscript{39} Selon Grohmann, Arabische Paläographie, I, 110, qui renvoie à al-Râghihib al-Isfahânî et al-Bakrî; on ajoutera le passage du Fitâristi déjà mentionné (voir n. 13).

\textsuperscript{40} Dans le cas de Kûfa, il est permis de penser que l'emploi de la préparation à base de dates que nous avons signalée plus haut avait une incidence sur la renommée des parchemins qui y étaient produits. Il pourrait y avoir là une relative analogie avec le cas de Pergame où, selon certains, la technique de production du parchemin aurait fait de sensibles progrès au point de valoriser à la ville de passer pour le berceau du parchemin (cf. Ryder, "Biology and History", 25).

\textsuperscript{41} Reed souligne l'importance de l'eau dans le processus de fabrication et les problèmes liés au séchage en pays chaud (Ancient Skins, 132, 147).

\textsuperscript{42} Rotulius désigne un rouleau sur lequel les lignes d'écriture sont perpendiculaires au sens de déroulement: sur le volumen, les lignes sont groupées en colonnes et sont parallèles au sens de déroulement.


\textsuperscript{44} S. Ory, "Un nouveau type de mistsch, inventaire des Corans en rouleaux de provenance damascaine, conservés à Istanbul", REI, XXXIII (1965), 87–149.
rouleaux qui pouvaient être constitués de plusieurs morceaux cousus ou collés bout à bout.

La confection des cahiers: les manuscrits coraniques anciens

Comme le papyrus, le parchemin est un matériau dont l’emploi est anciennement attesté dans le domaine arabe. Dans les premiers temps de l’islam, il est utilisé en concurrence avec le papyrus aussi bien dans l’administration que pour la copie des manuscrits. Il est assez onéreux; aussi n’hésite-t-on pas à le réemployer, ainsi qu’on le verra plus loin, et ce dès une époque ancienne. L’apparition du papier remettra en cause l’emploi du parchemin, ce malgré les qualités de ce dernier et particulièrement sa résistance; du IVe/Xe s. jusqu’au VIIIe/XVe s. — peut-être même jusqu’au IXe/XVe s., son utilisation se restreint et les formules pour le mettre en œuvre évoluent. Nous n’avons pas d’estimation du nombre des manuscrits arabes musulmans copiés sur parchemin; au cours de notre enquête, il est apparu que la proportion des Corans dans notre échantillon était particulièrement importante, soit que l’on ait préféré ce support pour la copie de ce texte, soit qu’on ait apporté plus de soin à sa conservation — ces deux facteurs pouvant d’ailleurs se combiner. Nous n’avons pas mis en évidence de techniques particulières dans l’emploi du parchemin.

46 Ibid., 114.
47 Le parchemin est mentionné dans le Coran (S. LII, v. 3); comme le papyrus — et pour les mêmes raisons, le parchemin était connu en Arabe prédislamique ainsi que le rappelle Grohmann (Arabische Paläographie, I, 109).

selon qu’il s’agissait ou non de Corans; au plus pourrait-on noter que la matière première est en moyenne d’une meilleure qualité dans le premier cas, mais il serait indispensable d’examiner un nombre plus important de manuscrits non coraniques sur parchemin pour aboutir à une conclusion sérieuse en ce domaine.

À l’avant des études la façon dont les copistes musulmans constituaient les cahiers de parchemin, il ne nous paraît pas inutile de rappeler comment procédaient les copistes de l’Occident médiéval: ceux-ci pliaient généralement une, deux, trois ou quatre fois la peau en deux, ce qui avait pour conséquence de produire des cahiers constitués de 2 (in folio), 4 (in quarto), 8 (in octavo) ou 16 (in 12) feuillets. Ce mode de pliage avait une autre conséquence: elle est formulée par la règle de Gregoire, ainsi appelée du nom du savant allemand qui fit observer le premier que, dans un cahier, les deux côtés des feuillets qui se faisaient face étaient de même nature. Ainsi, si le f° x v° est le côté fleur de parchemin, le recto qui lui fait face (f° x +1 r°) sera également le côté fleur (cf. fig. 2).

Au début de notre recherche sur les Corans sur parchemin conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale, nous avions mis à part les quelques manuscrits qui comportaient des séquences textuelles suffisantes pour qu’il fût possible d’en tirer des enseignements sur la façon dont les cahiers étaient constitués. Parmi ces copies, le MS Smith-Lesoufî 193 était de ceux dont la composition avait valeur d’exemple; malgré la perte, c’est-à-dire, de quelques feuillets (voir par ex. le cahier III, fig. 3), il apparut très vite que les cahiers comportaient dix feuillets qui présentaient la séquence suivante:

p/c, p/c, p/c, p/c, p/c + c/p, c/p, c/p, c/p, c/p (fig. 3).

Ces observations trouvèrent leur confirmation dans l’étude de deux grandes collections de Corans copiés sur parchemin entre la

50 Déroche, Catalogue, VI/I, 96, no. 110; on retrouve la même structure dans le fragment BN Arabe 358 b, datable d’avant 800/913-4 (cf. FIMMOD, no 19).
51 Un feuillet correspond à un ensemble “p/c” ou “c/p” (c = côté pair; p = côté impair); le passage de la couture au centre du cahier est indiqué par “4°”.

FRANÇOIS DÉROCHE

LE PARCHEMIN DANS LES MANUSCRITS ISLAMIQUES
fin du IVe/Ve s. et le courant du IVe/Xe s. celle de Paris d’abord, celle du Musée des arts turc et islamique d’Istanbul par la suite. On remarque que l’écrasante majorité des manuscrits est constituée de cahiers de 10 feuillets — des quinuacs; l’implication immédiate de cette observation est que ce type de cahier ne peut être obtenu par un pliage simple, ce que confirme la suite de l’analyse. La façon dont le parchemin est utilisé pour former chaque cahier montre une même cohérence dans les habitudes des artisans du livre: le recto du 1er (ou côté de première) est pratiquement toujours le côté poil du parchemin,52 les rectos des feuillets suivants, soit les 2e, 3e, 4e et 5e du cahier, sont également des côtés poil (cf. fig. 1). La règle de Gregory ne s’applique donc pas; lorsque le manuscrit est ouvert, un contraste apparaît entre les deux moitiés d’une double page,53 sauf au point de rencontre de deux cahiers — où l’on trouvera deux cœurs poil l’un en face de l’autre — et au milieu de chaque cahier — où, tout naturellement, on trouvera deux cœurs chair. Il arrive que, par accident, cette disposition soit enfrentée à l’intérieur d’un cahier dans un manuscrit dans lequel, par ailleurs, la séquence que nous venons de décider est rigoureusement observée. On est conduit à supposer que les copistes — ou les warrâqs — du monde islamique ne plaient pas les peaux, mais débitaient préalablement le parchemin en morceaux selon la dimension qu’ils souhaitaient donner au manuscrit; de fait, une peau pouvait le cas échéant être employée dans différents cahiers, voire dans différents manuscrits.54 Puis des morceaux de même taille, en principe au nombre de cinq, étaient empilés dans la même position et pliés en deux en leur milieu de manière à former un cahier.

Nous avons déjà signalé à quel point cette façon de faire s’accompagnait de celle qui était communément employée en Occident. S’agissait-il d’une innovation ou existait-il dans le domaine du livre une tradition qui avait pu être reprise par les artisans musulmans? La fabrication du cahier de papyrus pourrait constituer un élément de réponse: on a en effet observé que, pour fabriquer un cahier, on débitait le rouleau de papyrus en feuilles qu’on empilait au fur et à mesure, les fibres horizontales au-dessus; le nombre voulu de feuilles ayant été ainsi assemblé, on pliait le tas en deux par le milieu et on obtenait un cahier où, systématiquement, une page avec les fibres verticales faisait face à une page avec les fibres horizontales — à l’exception, naturelle de la double page située au milieu du cahier.55 Il est tentant d’expliquer la séquence des côtés d’un côté de l’intérieur des cahiers des manuscrits que nous venons de décider par référence à l’emploi des biseautés de papyrus au cours du débitage des rouleaux; la formule du quinuac, qui l’on rencontre parfois dans les cahiers de papyrus, peut s’expliquer par la commodité qu’elle représente du point de vue des compteurs.56 On notera enfin que cette façon de composer les cahiers semble avoir été connue dans les plus anciens manuscrits syriques.57

La séquence des côtés du parchemin dans les quinuacs ne constitue pas l’unique originalité des manuscrits du Coran de ces deux collections. L’utilisation des peaux y est également très particulière: en observant les cahiers, nous avons remarqué la présence assez fréquente de talons, ce dès une date assez ancienne puisqu’un fragment coranique bijâzi, le MS Paris, BN Arabe 328 a, comporte un feuillet (f. 17) qui s’achève par un talon. Vérification faite, la présence de ces talons ne correspondait pas à des pertes de texte. Une recherche plus approfondie a permis de découvrir que des feuilles isolées, pourvus de talon, ont été systématiquement intégrés dans les cahiers en "remplacement" de biseautés authentiques. A l’intérieur de quinuacs, leur nombre varie de 2 à 8 (cf. fig. 4 et 5), voire 1? Une étude plus

52 Les "papyrus" de parchemin sont en revanche d’abord utilisés du côté chair (cf. Grohmann, *Arabische Paligraphie*, I, 111); selon M. Haran (*Bible Scrolls*, 48), les copistes arabes auraient agi de même dans le cas du rasq obtenu par "sciage" de la peau dans le sens de l’épaisseur, alors qu’ils préféraient employer d’abord le côté poil du quinuac.

53 Muzelle, *Vocabulaire codéologie*, 92: "ensemble de deux pages se faisant vis-à-vis, constitué par le verso d’un feuillet et le recto du suivant".

54 Voir le cas du MS BN Arabe 5935.


56 Il n’est pas sûr qu’il y ait eu uniformité dans la composition des rouleaux de papyrus: le nombre de 20 feuilles collées bout à bout est parfois mentionné à la suite de Pline, mais ne constitue pas une règle; il ne nous paraît pas nécessaire de chercher dans cette direction l’origine de nos quinuacs puisque, de toute façon, le débitage du rouleau se faisait indépendamment des "joins" (grec kollesis, au sg) entre les feuilles (grec kollema, au sg.)

approfondie d’une série de manuscrits formant un groupe homogène tant du point de vue de la paléographie que de celui de la codicologie a permis d’établir que seul le quart des quinions était composé de cinq bifilelets38; dans les autres cas, des feuillets isolés avaient été enchainés de manière symétrique dans les cahiers de manière à remplacer le ou les bifilelets qui auraient dû se trouver à leur place (cf. fig. 6). La formule la plus commune, d’une fréquence analogue à celle des cahiers de cinq bifilelets, voit l’insertion de deux feuillets isolés qui constituent les f° 3 et 8 dans le quinion. Au total, c’est dans 40% des cas que l’on trouve deux feuillets isolés intercalés symétriquement en des positions variables parmi les bifilelets. Asez fréquente également (environ 10% de cas) était la formule dans laquelle six feuillets isolés (soit trois groupes de deux feuillets) étaient insérés entre deux bifilelets. Il semble que, dans la mesure du possible, on ait veillé à ne pas mettre en danger la solidité du cahier — et donc du manuscrit.39

Il convient d’ajouter qu’il existe des exceptions à cette façon de faire; il arrive, rarement, que le total des feuillets d’un cahier soit inférieur ou supérieur à dix: neuf ou onze, par exemple, sans qu’il y ait de lacune dans le texte. Il arrive, un peu plus souvent, que la position des feuillets isolés ne soit pas symétrique: ainsi, ils occuperaient la position des f° 3 et 7 dans le cahier, au lieu de 3 et 8. Mais on constate que la répartition dans les deux moitiés du cahier subsiste et que la séquence des côtés du parchemin est respectée.

La confection des cahiers: cas particuliers à l’époque ancienne

Ce que nous venons de décrire est particulièrement caractéristique de manuscrits coraniques qui datent principalement du III°/IV° s.60 En fut-il toujours ainsi? Pour répondre à cette

question de manière satisfaisante, il serait nécessaire de travailler sur des séries numériquement importantes, comme cela fut le cas pour les manuscrits dont il vient d’être question; or le nombre des manuscrits antérieurs au III°/IV° s. est plus réduit, ce qui ne peut que compliquer l’interprétation de l’image constrastée qu’on retire de leur examen. Le fragment de Coran Paris, BN Arabe 328a — déjà mentionné — aurait été copié au début du III°/IV° s. peut-être même à la fin du Ier/VII° s.;61 cette datation s’appuie sur la paléographie: l’écriture appartient au groupe hijazi. Ces feuillets épars acquis au Caire par J. L. Asselin de Cherville entrent au cours du XIX° s. dans la collection de la bibliothèque; à cette occasion, on les relia et, pour mieux les protéger, on inséra entre eux des feuillets de papier qui présentent l’inconvénient de gêner l’observation codicologique. Plusieurs groupes de feuillets portent un texte continu: les f° 4 à 22, 23 à 40 et 41 à 48; on peut y ajouter les f° 57 à 64 — autrement dit le fragment Arabe 328b — que nous avons considéré comme distinct d’un point de vue paléographique, mais qui doit avoir fait partie du même Coran.52 Faute d’avoir pu pousser très loin l’analyse codicologique, pour les raisons que nous venons d’exposer, nous proposons avec les réserves que s’imposent l’analyse suivante: le fragment comporte quatre quaternions, les f° 7–14, 24–31, 32–39 et 57–64; on peut ajouter le cahier des f° 42–48 (soit 7 filets), dont le feuillet ultime a disparu. Aux f° 15–21, il s’agit en revanche d’une irrégularité. La séquence des côtés du parchemin, par exemple aux f° 7–14, est intéressante:63

c/p, p/c, c/p, p/c + c/p, p/c, p/c (cf. fig. 7).

Comme cette disposition est observable ailleurs, on pourrait penser que ce manuscrit constitue un exemple de l’obtention de cahiers par pliage. Mais deux des quaternions nous invitent à écarter cette hypothèse: les bifilelets des f° 43–48 et 44–47 de


même que ceux des ff° 59–62 et 60–61 opposent des côtés chair à des côtés poil. C’est un argument très fort contre le pliage; en revanche, on notera que le côté chair est systématiquement côté de première des différents cahiers.

Il ne faut pourtant pas conclure que le quaternion du type décrit est le seul modèle connu à l’époque; un autre manuscrit en caractères hijāzī, Paris, BN Arabe 328c, est formé de quinines de composition habituelle (c’est à dire avec le côté poil formant le recto de tous les feuillets dans la première moitié). Il faudra attendre que les Corans hijāzī soient mieux connus pour distinguer des orientations d’ensemble. Pour le moment, nous constatons qu’une relative diversité dans l’emploi du parchemin prévaut pour cette période — fin Ier/VIIe et début IIe/VIIIe s. Elle ne présente pas un caractère exceptionnel en ce qui concerne le nombre des feuillets par cahier; la place du côté chair comme côté de première nous semble en revanche plus inhabituelle.

Nous avons évoqué plus haut le MS Paris, BN Arabe 324 qui peut être daté de la seconde moitié du IIe/VIIIe s.; un premier examen permet de constater qu’une majorité des feuillets a pour recto le côté chair. Deux séries de feuillets — les ff° 18 à 27 puis 30 à 37 — présentent un texte continu, sur dix feuillets dans le premier cas, sur huit dans le second; comme nous l’avons indiqué, le côté chair du parchemin est le recto des feuillets, à l’exception du ff° 23, inversé. On pourrait penser qu’il s’agit de vestiges de cahiers de 16 ou 20; une autre explication nous paraît préférable, à la lumière de l’étude des 122 feuillets de texte coranique rassemblés dans les MSS Istanbul, TIEM 51 et 52, dont l’écriture est analogique à celle des fragments parisiens et qui présente une suite continue de côtés chair comme recto.64 Dans les deux cas, il s’agit de manuscrits in plano, c’est à dire que chacun de leurs feuillets correspond à une peau entière;65 le cahier cesse d’être le fondement du livre. Les feuillets sont tous placés de la même façon, autrement dit: tous les recto sont des côtés chair du parchemin, tous les verso étant des côtés poil. Aucun de ces manuscrits ne nous est malheureusement parvenu avec sa reliure originelle, si bien qu’il n’est pas possible de savoir comment les feuillets étaient tenus ensemble; étaient-ils cousus à plat ou montés sur onglet? Leur état de conservation ne permet pas de décider quelle solution leur fut appliquée. Le MS Ṣanʿa’, Dār al-Makḥūṭāt 20–33.1 semble également composé de cette façon, mais il n’est pas précisé si tous les feuillets ont la même orientation.66

D’autres formules de composition des cahiers de parchemin apparaissent occasionnellement. Le quaternion intervient parfois dans des manuscrits de format oblong du IIIe/IIXe s. et dans des Corans de format vertical du IVe/VXe s.; curieusement, cela n’a pas d’incidence sur la séquence des côtés du parchemin qui reste conforme à ce qui a été dit précédemment, le côté poil étant côté de première. Quelques cas sont déconcertants. Ainsi les MSS Istanbul, TIEM 552 et 553 (IIIe/IIXe s.) sont-ils formés de quaternions, à l’intérieur desquels le recto des ff° 1, 2 et 4 est le côté poil, tandis que le ff° 3 est à l’envers — son recto est le côté chair. Un autre manuscrit fragmentaire de cette collection, SE 148, semble constitué de quinines qui tendent à respecter la règle de Gregory, mais dont le côté de première est tantôt poil, tantôt chair; par ailleurs, un "incident" affecte fréquemment les bifeuillets n° 2 et/ou 4.

La confection des cahiers: le cas du Maghreb

Dans la partie occidentale du monde musulman, le parchemin est resté plus longtemps en usage — surtout pour la copie du Coran; c’est en effet jusqu’au VIIIe/XIVe s., peut-être même jusqu’au IXe/XVe s., que ce matériau s’y maintient, aux côtés du papier. Cette manifestation de conservatisme ne doit pas laisser penser que la mise en œuvre du parchemin se conforme aux usages que nous venons de décrire. Au contraire, on note que, dans l’ensemble, la succession des côtés du parchemin est conforme à la règle de Gregory et qu’il n’y a pas à proprement parler de préférence marquée pour telle ou telle formule de composition des cahiers. Le quinion n’est pas inconnu: deux manuscrits de la

64 Il est difficile de juger sur les photos du Coran de la mosquée Sayyidnā al-Husayn de Caire (voir n. 33) si la même disposition est observée.

65 Il n’y a donc pas eu de pliage comme c’est habituellement le cas — depuis l’A faîte, formé par pliage en deux d’une feuille de parchemin, jusqu’à des formules où la peau est pliée successivement à plusieurs reprises.

66 C’est à dire en piquant à travers toute l’épaisseur d’un groupe de feuillets, le long de la marge intérieure, à courte distance du pli (cf. Munzelle, Vocabulaire codicologique, 179).

collection parisienne, les MSS Arabe 6090⁶⁸ et 6499⁶⁹ comportent des quinuums — bien que cette formule ne soit pas la seule qu'on y rencontre. Le cas échéant, les cahiers de parchemin peuvent être plus importants: ceux de MS Arabe 6095 ont ainsi jusqu'à 14 ff.⁷⁰ Les copistes ont également employé des quaternions, par exemple dans les MSS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Arabe 385⁷¹ ou Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, Arab. 881.⁷² Comme le remarque P. Orsatti,⁷³ le ternion semble avoir été une particularité maghrébine liée à l'emploi du parchemin. C'est là une divergence notable par rapport aux habitudes que l'on a pu dégager pour les Corans de la période ancienne. Dans les copies du Coran sur parchemin provenant de l'Occident musulman, les ternions sont fréquents: ainsi huit des manuscrits coraniques conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale sont-ils composés de ternions, soit exclusivement, soit en forte proportion.⁷⁴ À la Bibliothèque Vaticane, chaque manuscrit coranique sur parchemin est formé de cahiers de ce type, de même que six des sept Corans de la collection.⁷⁵ Dans tous ces manuscrits, il s'agit de ceux de la Bibliothèque Nationale ou de ceux du Vatican, la règle de Gregory est respectée comme on le voit, par exemple, dans les ternions du MS Arabe 395 — qui sont mêlés à des binions; les uns et les autres ont un côté poil pour côté de première (cf. fig. ⁷).⁷⁶ Le MS Arabe 5935 présente les mêmes caractéristiques, il est beaucoup plus régulier que le manuscrit précédent puisque la seule anomalie est constituée par le ternion final, un quinum où la séquence des cœurs du parchemin se conforme toutefois à la règle de Gregory. Cette particularité ne paraît pas être le fruit d'une innovation tardive: comme le montre le MS Vatican, BAV Vat. arab. 310, elle est attestée dès le IV/IXe s.⁷⁷

Les quinuums de deux autres manuscrits de la collection parisienne, Arabe 6090⁷⁸ et 6499⁷⁹, tous deux copiés en Andalousie, respectent dans l'ensemble cette règle et présentent en majorité des doubles pages où se font face des côtés de même nature. Cela n'implique pourtant pas que ces cahiers aient été obtenus par pliage comme ces cahiers des manuscrits occidentaux que nous évoquons au début. Les "incidents" — par exemple pour les deux premiers bifeuillets du cahier I du MS Arabe 6090, ou encore au début du cahier XIII (ff. 130–132) du MS Arabe 6499 — le laissent penser. Cela nous paraît confirmé par le caractère hétéroclite des bifeuillets entrant dans la composition d'un même cahier: nous avons signalé plus haut que des racines des poils subsistaient sur un certain nombre des feuillets de deux manuscrits de Paris — BN Arabe 5935 et 6090; la répartition erratic- de ces feuillets et l'impossibilité de trouver deux bifeuillets provenant de la même une nous confirment dans l'idée que le parchemin était pré-découpé et que les poils obtenus étaient empilés pour former les cahiers, sans égard pour leur origine.⁸¹

⁶⁸ Voir n. 24.
⁶⁹ Voir ci-dessous.
⁷⁰ Voir n. 23; chaque juz' est formé de deux cahiers: le premier comporte toujours 14 ff, alors que le second compte de 8 à 12 ff.
⁷³ ibid, 297–298. Nous avions esquissé une remarque dans ce sens (Déroche, Catalogue, 1/2, 14). Il existe sur ce point une convergence avec les manuscrits hébraïques espagnols: selon Beit-Arié (Hebrew Codicology, 43), 8 manuscrits copiés entre 1197 et 1300, essentiellement à Tolède, sont formés de ternions.
⁷⁵ Vat. arab. 310 et Barb. or. 46, et les Corans Vat. arab. 210, 211, 212, 213, 215 et Borg. arab. 51; voir P. Orsatti loc. cit.
⁷⁶ Déroche, Catalogue, 1/2, 32–3, n° 298. La séquence des recto est d'ordinaire p/c, c/p, p/c; mais elle est p/c, p/c, c/p dans le cahier IV. En ce qui concerne les binions, l'un d'eux est irrégulier (XII) alors que les trois autres sont réguliers.
⁷⁷ Voir n. 28.
⁷⁹ Voir n. 24.
⁸⁰ Voir ci-dessous.
⁸¹ Il est regrettable que les manuscrits sur parchemin de Kairouan et plus particulièrement ceux à caractère juridique — n'aient pas fait l'objet d'une étude codicologique; celle-ci permettrait peut-être de mettre en lumière des particularités régionales. En ce qui concerne l'emploi du parchemin au Maghreb, on complétera ce qui vient d'être dit par les quelques indications
La confection des cahiers: solutions mixtes

Plusieurs éléments concourent à suggérer que les qualités de résistance du parchemin étaient fort appréciées. Quand le papier commença à concurrencer fortement le parchemin, de nouveaux ateliers se firent jour chez ceux des copistes — ou des commanditaires — qui souhaitaient garantir la durabilité des manuscrits. La première fut de sélectionner les textes auxquels on réservait l’emploi d’un matériau subjectible devenu comparativement plus cher: ce fut le plus souvent le Coran à qui échut ce privilège. Une autre approche consistait à associer papier et parchemin de manière à conserver la résistance du second là où elle était le plus utile et de tirer avantantage du prix plus bas du papier en l’employant là où il était moins exposé. Ainsi apparaissent les cahiers mixtes composés de papier et de parchemin, ce dernier étant placé à l’extérieur (et éventuellement au centre) du cahier (cf. fig. 9), tandis que le papier occupait l’espace intermédiaire.

Avant d’étudier deux manuscrits où le papier et le parchemin sont utilisés conjointement, signalons une technique dont nous n’avons à ce jour recensé qu’un unique exemple dans le domaine des manuscrits islamiques — mais que des manuscrits copiés sur papyrus attestent antérieurement à l’apparition de l’Islam.  

82 Roed signale fugitivement cette utilisation (Ancient Skins, 5); on en trouvera un exemple dans V. Scheil, Deux traités de Philon, Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique française au Caire, IX/2 (Paris, 1893), 7.

83 W. Althardt, Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin (Berlin, 1887-99), II, 249, no 1557.

84 Comme nous le soulignions en n. 59, nous ne disposons malheureusement pas d’éléments pour apprécier les coûts de fabrication des manuscrits; on aimerait en particulier connaître l’incidence de l’utilisation du papier — et si elle fut significative ou marginale — sur ces prix.


86 Il existe des irrégularités vers la fin: le 11e cahier (ff. 106-115) est intégralement en parchemin; le 12e comprend deux bifeuilles de parchemin en position centrale (ff. 121-124).

incomplet; il inclut deux feuillets dépareillés de parchemin (ff. 97 et 99), placés dans la seconde moitié du cahier dans une position identique, le côté poil étant le recto. Le deuxième cahier (XIII, ff. 100 à 115; voir fig. 10) comporte quatre feuillets de parchemin (ff. 104, 106, 109 et 111): il s'agit de deux bifeuilles disposés de manière différente (le côté poil est le recto du f. 104 alors que pour le f. 106, c'est le côté chair). Le troisième cahier (XV, ff. 128 à 134; voir fig. 10) est mutilé: il inclut trois feuillets de parchemin dont le premier est dépareillé (f. 128; recto: côté poil) alors que les deux autres constituent le bifeuillet "central" (ff. 133–134) dont le premier recto est le côté chair. Le quatrième cahier (XXI, ff. 187–196; voir fig. 10) est régulier: le bifeuillet extérieur est en parchemin, avec le côté poil comme côté de première. Le dernier des cahiers (XXIII, ff. 207–216; voir fig. 10) est intégralement composé de parchemin: la séquence des recto est la suivante:

\[ p/c, p/c, c/p, c/p, p/c + c/p, p/c, p/c, c/p, c/p^{88}\]

Comme on le voit, l'utilisation manque de cohérence: à l'exception des cahiers XXI et peut-être XV (dans son état originel), le parchemin ne sert pas de protection extérieure et la façon dont il est placé, en dépit de ce qui peut apparaître comme une préférence relative pour le côté poil au recto, semble aléatoire. Le parchemin lui-même est d'une qualité très différente de celle des parchimens anciens qui sont dans l'ensemble plus épais: où a-t-il été acheté? Est-ce une réutilisation? Autant de questions qui restent sans réponse. En tout état de cause, il ne s'agit pas de cahiers mixtes sur le modèle de ceux du MS Arabe 6499, mais d'un mélange. Le manuscrit relève plutôt du domaine des *curiosa* et nous pensons que le copiste a employé le parchemin parce qu'il s'agissait d'une rareté, un peu comme les papiers teints qu'il affectionne, mais en aucun cas parce qu'il souhaitait tirer parti de la meilleure résistance du parchemin. Jusqu'à plus ample informé, le MS BN Arabe 2547 est le codex islamique le plus récent dans lequel du parchemin a été utilisé.

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Quelques remarques sur l'utilisation des peaux

Etant donné l'importance que revêt la fabrication des cahiers pour la confection du codex, il était naturel qu'on lui réservât une place importante dans cette étude et la série d'exemples que nous avons proposée illustre diverses modalités de cette opération. Le codicologue ne saurait cependant arrêter là son enquête: l'utilisation du parchemin comporte en effet des particularités qu'il est utile de signaler. Encore une fois, il est présumé d'espérer établir un catalogue exhaustif et nous nous limiterons à quelques exemples qui pourraient éventuellement autoriser des inférences d'ordre économique. On remarque ainsi que le MS Paris, BN Arabe 6095 incorpore des feuillets qui correspondent au bord naturel du parchemin (par ex. le f. 17), ou d'autres sur lesquels subsistent des pails (par ex. au f. 39v); cela paraît indiquer que cette copie a été réalisée à moindres frais. Le MS Arabe 6499 de la même collection, bien que plus soigné, contient un feuillet dont le bord, du côté de la marge de gouttière, est oblique: en dépit d'une volonté affichée de réaliser une belle copie, Ibn Khairûn n'a pas pu se résoudre à écarter un morceau qui lui donnait presque un bifeuillet complet. Même un manuscrit princiern, comme le MS Arabe 6090, contient quelques feuillets où un petit trou placé à l'intérieur de la justification a contraint le copiste à adapter son écriture au support. Dans les Corans du III/IX s., l'emploi systématique de feuillets dépareillés pour recomposer des bifeuilles, tel que nous l'avons présenté plus haut (cf. également les fig. 3–5), doit être soigneusement être compris comme un effort de rationalisation de l'utilisation des peaux: leur débitage devrait produire d'abondantes chutes qu'il était hors de question de jeter.

La régule sur parchemin

Le parchemin impose également des techniques particulières de régule — principalement en raison de sa rigidité. Au lieu de la *mistura*, familière à ceux qui s'occupent de manuscrits islamiques plus récents, on a recours à la pointe sèche, à la mine de plomb ou à l'encre. La typologie des régules serait ici sans intérêt; il est en revanche opportun d'évoquer la façon dont on réglait le parchemin. La pointe sèche permet en principe de régler plusieurs feuillets à la fois — à condition d'appuyer un peu; or

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88 Voir n. 51.
nous n'avons pas encore trouvé à ce jour d'exemple de cette technique. On savait en revanche régler le parchemin par bifeuillet, c'est à dire à un moment où, le cahier n'étant pas cousu, on pouvait prendre un à un chaque bifeuillet.99 Il semble que, dans la pratique commune, la régle était tracée feuillet par feuillet. C'est ainsi que procédaient les copistes qui employaient l'encre ou la mine de plomb.

Certains des manuscrits en caractères hijazi ont conservé les traces d'une règle, preuve que dès les origines les copistes étaient conscients des problèmes de mise en page.90 Il n'en est dès lors que plus curieux de constater l'écrasante absence de traces de règle sur la majorité des Corans en écriture abbasidique ancienne.91 La régularité de l'écriture laisse pourtant supposer que les copistes utilisaient un système pour guider les lignes, mais il n'en subsiste aucun vestige.92

99 Voir par ex. le MS Istanbul, TIEM, SÉ 362.
90 Voir par ex. les fragments Paris, BN Arabe 328a (v. n. 58) et e (Tisserant, Specimens, pl. 41b; Bergsträsser et Pretzl, Die Geschichte des Korantexts, fig. 8; Abbott, The Rise of the North Arabic Script, 24; Déroche, Catalogue, f. 1, 61, n° 7).
91 Deux phénomènes en contradiction avec cette situation prévalente doivent être signalés ici : (1) les manuscrits copiés sur le parchemin téint (c'est en particulier le cas du coran bleu) présentent les traces d'un système très complet de règle ; (2) les enlumineurs ont souvent laissé subsister la régle préparatoire des décors sur des manuscrits qui n'en ont pas par ailleurs.
92 Selon E. Whelan ("Writing the Word of God: Some Early Qur'ān Manuscripts and Their Milieus, Part I: Ars Orientalis, XX (1990), 115), la présence de régle pour les décors et plus encore les infimes irrégularités de la ligne de base des lettres seraient la preuve qu'il n'y eut jamais de régle, mais que le copiste se fiait à son coup d'œil. Cela ne nous paraît pas diriment ; qui dit régle ne dit pas règle et la ligne tracée sur le parchemin (ou le papier) n'est qu'un guide qui n'empêchera pas la main de bourger peu ou prou par rapport à elle. Il nous semble par ailleurs qu'une comparaison entre les techniques de l'enlumineur et du copiste n'est pas pertinente pour trancher la question.
par de l'arabe. Le cas inverse se présente également: sur les palimpsestes Lewis-Mingana, des textes chrétiens en arabe qui dateraient du Xe, voire du IXe s., recouvrent une page de la Septante en grec, des fragments en syriaque et trois passages coraniques en caractères hijāzī. Le laps de temps qui s'écoulait entre la copie des deux textes successifs n'était pas nécessairement très long: le copiste pouvait en effet utiliser cette procédure pour rectifier un texte après s'être avisé qu'il avait fait une erreur.

Pour être le plus connu, le réemploi que nous venons de décrire n'est pas le seul que l'on puisse rencontrer. L'étude des reliures anciennes montre que les relieurs réutilisaient volontiers de vieux parchemins. Dans le cas des reliures à ais de bois, il leur arrivait fréquemment, semble-t-il, de coller en guise de doublure de la face intérieure de l'ais un feuillette provenant d'un vieux manuscrit. Il n'était pas rare non plus que l'on débitât les feuillets en bandes pour renforcer les dos des blocs de cahiers ou encore pour servir d'âme à l'emboîtage caractéristique des reliures coraniques anciennes. Un feuillette de parchemin pouvait également être converti en reliure, si ses dimensions le permettaient. Il serait cependant erroné de cantonner les relieurs dans un rôle de récupérateurs de parchemin usagé: sans jamais spécifier s'il s'agit ou non de parchemin neuf, Bakr al-Ishbili mentionne à plusieurs reprises ce matériau dans son traité des reliures, le Kitāb al-Taysīr fī šinā'āt al-tasfīr, et l'on peut supposer que ses propos concernent également le parchemin neuf. On y retrouve les emplois que nous avons pu constater sur des reliures anciennes, comme la doublure, ou encore l'emploi de bandes de parchemin à la jonction entre l'ais de bois et le bloc des cahiers. On notera l'existence d'un type de couvreur appelé shidq qui consiste à coller sur un morceau de cuir deux à trois feuilles de papier, puis du parchemin: on obtient ainsi une sorte de cartonnage. Signalions enfin que l'auteur recommande l'emploi d'une colle particulière pour le parchemin.

CONCLUSION

Si, comme on l'a vu, l'étendue des connaissances techniques des parchemiers arabes peut faire l'objet de discussions, l'analyse de l'utilisation des peaux dans les manuscrits nous amène sur un terrain plus ferme: elle permet de constater que, parmi les héritiers du codex antique, les Musulmans occupent une place à part. Reprenant peut-être des techniques qui s'étaient antérieurement imposées — au Moyen-Orient — pour la confection du codex de papyrus, la tradition qui apparaît en position dominante aux IIIe–IVe/IXe–Xe s. se distingue en effet par des règles originales: prédécoupage systématique des peaux, préférence quasi exclusive pour les quinions, séquence uniforme des côtés du parchemin, reconstitution de "faux bifeuillets" par combinaison de deux feuillets dépareillés. D'autres façons de faire sont cependant connues: les plus anciennes sont pour le moment trop isolées pour autoriser une interprétation; celles qui distinguent l'Occident

98 Grohmann en signale deux exemples (Arabische Paläographie, i, 109 et n. 6).
100 Voir par ex. H. Loebenstein, Koranfragmente auf Pergament aus der Papyrusansammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Mitteilungen aus der Papyrusammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer), Neue Serie, XIV (Vienna, 1982), 24–5 (n° I = A Perg. 2). Le fragment coranique cité plus haut correspond peut-être à une démarche similaire.
102 On doit distinguer cette utilisation de celle des préservateurs que nous avons évoqués précédemment.
103 Marçais et Poinssot, Objets kairouanais, 19 et 72; Deroche, "Quelques reliures médiévales", 89.
104 La collection des manuscrits de la grande mosquée de Damas nous en a livré un exemple.
108 al-Ishbili, al-Taysīr, 27; Gacek, "Arabic Bookmaking", 109. On pourrait rapprocher cette technique de celle qui est fréquemment utilisée pour les emboîtages (voir plus haut) et qui consiste en un collage de parchemin et de cuir.
musulman soulignent le particularisme de cette région sans qu'il soit possible d'en expliquer la cause.

La chronologie de l'emploi du parchemin dans les manuscrits islamiques commence à se laisser cerner plus précisément. La date de 980/1572–3 — celle du MS BN Arabe 2547 — peut difficilement être considérée comme un réel terminus ad quem pour l'emploi du parchemin dans les manuscrits islamiques. Ce matériel est utilisé dès le Ier/or VIIe s., dans des proportions qu'il est impossible de fixer par rapport au papyrus; bien qu'aucun manuscrit sûrement daté et localisé ne nous ait été conservé pour la période antérieure au IIIe/IXe s., il est permis de penser que, dans toutes les provinces du monde musulman, le parchemin a servi à la fabrication des manuscrits au cours d'un âge d'or qui va des origines jusqu'au IVe/Xe s. Deux témoins de la fin du IIIe/IXe s. pourraient indiquer, s'ils ont bien été copiés en Iran, que le parchemin était encore en usage dans cette région alors que le papier était en passe de s'imposer sans partage.111 Pour la même époque, dans la partie centrale du monde musulman, les vestiges sont plus importants et plus précis, surtout si on les conjuge avec ceux que nous avons laissés d'autres communautés de cette même région — par exemple les manuscrits du Mont Sinaï.112 Au IVe/Xe s. et au-delà, l'emploi du parchemin se restreint progressivement à l'Orient musulman, indépendamment de quelques cas isolés dont la portée exacte ne peut être exactement évaluée à l'heure actuelle. Dans son ultime bastion à l'Ouest, le parchemin continua à être employé dans la fabrication du codex, soit seul, soit en association avec le papier, jusqu'au VIIIe/XIVe s., et même jusqu'au IXe/XVe s.


113 Si, dans diverses régions du monde musulman, les parcheminiers ont laissé leur trace dans la toponymie urbaine, l'étude de celle-ci permettrait peut-être d'affiner la chronologie et de dresser une carte de l'industrie parcheminière en Terre d'Israël (voir le "Faubourg des Parcheminiers" à Cordoue: Le calendrier de Cordoue, Dozy éd., 166, n. 6).
Fig. 1

Quinion de type classique (IIIe/IXe s.). 1: côté poil; 2: côté chair.

Fig. 2

Quaternion de type occidental (voir légende de la fig. 1).

Quinion incorporant deux feuillets dépareillés pourvus d'un talon (ff. 4 et 7) et disposés symétriquement.
Fig. 5

Quinion incorporant huit feuillets dépareillés pourvus d'un talon (ff. 2 à 9) et disposés symétriquement.

Fig. 6

Quinion incorporant quatre feuillets dépareillés pourvus d'un talon (ff. 2, 4, 7 et 9) et disposés symétriquement.
Quaternion du MS Paris, BN Arabe 328a (fin 1er–début IIe/fin VIIe–début VIIIe s.); voir légende de la fig. 1.

Ternion de type maghrébin; voir légende de la fig. 1.
Fig. 9


Cahiers XIII, XV, XXI et XXIII du MS Paris, BN Arabe 2547.
1: parchemin (le trait fin signale l'emplacement du côté poil); 2: papier.
TWO NEW SOURCES
ON THE ART OF MIXING INK

IBRAHIM CHABBOUH

Despite its brevity, the book 'Umdat al-kutūb wa-'uddat dhawī al-albāb, written in all probability for al-Amīr al-Ṣanḥājī Tamīr b. al-Muʾizz b. Bāīs, is one of the most comprehensive sources for the codicology of Islamic manuscripts. Its unknown author gives a concise and balanced account of the selection of suitable pens and the ways in which they should be trimmed in preparation for writing particular scripts. He also describes inks and their accessories, the preparation of different types of black and coloured ink, the mixing of dyes, writing in gold, erasing, gilding, silvering and polishing, the manufacturing, glazing and ageing of paper, and the materials and tools of bookbinding.

This unique early source has had a considerable and lengthy influence on codicological literature, as is clearly shown by the presence of copies of the work in centres of Islamic culture from Rampur in India to Fez in Morocco. A direct echo of this book was heard a century and a half later, in the work of the Yemeni king Yūsuf b. ʿUmar b. ʿAli b. Rasūl (694/1294), al-

Mukhtara’ fi funūn min al-sun’, in which he reproduces the first ten chapters of the earlier work almost exactly, although with a degree of selectivity.

Early scholars divided the subject of codicology into four main areas: paper, ink, pens (or, sometimes, scripts) and binding. Each of these became associated with a particular guild, with the various practitioners of each differing in their scholarly credentials and social status. These guilds were usually mutually exclusive, which militated against a comprehensive and unified study of their various crafts until the appearance of the 'Umda.

Our information about these four different areas is far from equal. This is because those who have been qualified enough to write with discernment about the experience of past generations in this art have been concerned first and foremost with penmanship and calligraphy. For this reason, this field has been studied in rich detail and its development, rules and famous practitioners have been fully documented.

The aesthetic principles of calligraphy are without limit, since they belong to the realm of creativity, sense and aesthetics. As for the remaining three main categories, i.e. paper, ink and binding, the extant literature does not do justice to the skills involved in transmitting the huge amount of Islamic scholarship which has come down to us. We scarcely know anything about early paper-making, save a few disjointed descriptions which help us little in our understanding of how the many different types of paper used in Islamic manuscripts were made, not to mention the differences in the ingredients of various papers and the techniques used for their immersion.

glazing, colouring and the reduction of their acid content. Nor can we identify examples of the old and not so old papers referred to by specific names from the time of Ibn al-Naḍīm until that of al-Qalqashandi. For example, the author of the 'Umda gives a description of the manufacture of a paper which he names after the governor of Khurāsān Talha b. Tāhir (207/213/822-828), which is made of good-quality white hemp. He also describes a paper which is made of old straw, and mentions the procedure for its immersion and ageing.

By contrast, we find that the art of binding has been studied in a more useful and integrated fashion, despite a certain paucity of material. This art effectively completes the effort made by the writer by containing his ideas physically between the covers of a book. It requires a knowledge of the correct use of particular materials such as leather, silk, wood, cardboard, thread and glue. The author of the 'Umda lists the technical and personal qualities which should be combined in a practitioner of this art as "quick wittedness, sharp-sightedness, a light touch, a lack of hastiness, attention to detail, a good sitting posture, an amiable mien and good moral character." (We refer particularly to the twelfth chapter of the 'Umda, which may be considered the oldest complete and clear text to list and describe the tools of the bookbinder. It also explains the methods of binding, the selection and preparation of types of leather, and how to clean, stretch and strengthen them.)

One of most important later works devoted to the art of binding is that entitled Kitāb al-Taysir fi sinā‘at al-tasfir by the jurist Bāk b. Ibrāhīm al-Iṣbīlī (d. 628/1231), which he wrote at the request of the caliph Ya‘qūb b. Mānsūr. This work is the most accurate, comprehensive and descriptive study of the art of

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2 I have used a photographed copy of the Ambrosiana MS and also examined a good published edition of the work by Muhammad ‘Īsā Şāhīb (Kuwait, 1989). There is another copy, not used for this edition, in the Asfaḍy Library, India (MS no. 221), considered by Awwād to be of anonymous authorship (see K. Awwād, ‘al-Khāṭṭ al-‘arabī fi ṣīḥ al-darāsān qiḍimīn wa khāṭībān’, Ma‘mūr [Baghdad], XV [November 1986], 393).
3 This is also the way in which the subject is treated in ‘Umdat al-kuttāb. See also al-Qalqashandi, Subh al-α’sā (Cairo, 1331-1319/1913-1918), II, 463, where, instead of the category of binding, the author refers to "competence in the writers' craft." "Ink," he says, "is one of the four foundations of writing, and as they say:
A quarter of writing is in the blackness of the ink,
and a quarter in competence in the writers' craft.
A quarter is in the fine trimming of the pen,
and on [the quality of] the paper rests the fourth of these."
binding in Almohad Morocco and Andalusia. Apart from this work, there is also the treatise by Abū al-`Abbās Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Sufyānī, written in 1029/1620, on the art of bookbinding and the dissolving of gold.10

Early historical examples of bindings provide us with information about their salient artistic and technical features, successive studies of which have enabled us to distinguish the characteristics, styles and preferred materials of the main schools. Of these, particular mention should be made of the work of Sarre, Grätz, Poinsot and Marçais.11

The wealth of artistic features in the preparation of Islamic manuscripts after the 5th/11th century is reflected in the great variety of colours with which copyists, illuminators and gilders adorned their work. The experiments of the inkmakers (habbarūn) soon went beyond their limited beginnings as their expertise came to encompass the blending of various shades of colours. Nor was the blending of a coloured ink confined to a single recorded experiment; rather we find different ways of arriving at the same colour being recorded in widely separated parts of the Muslim world, each arrived at using the substances available in that particular region.

Of these inkmakers, who occupied an important position in the world of bookmaking, some were also scholars. These would record the experiments with which they had become acquainted in books and in the manuals which were written to teach prospective secretaries in government service the essential features of their art. Examples of these are the works of Abū Bakr al-Ṣūfī, Qudama b. Ja’far, Ibn Durustawayh, al-Nuwayri and al-Qalqashandī. Only occasionally, as far as I know, were these arts treated comprehensively chapter by chapter, as was the case in `Umādat al-kutāb.

In view of this, I wish to present here two new texts on the preparation of ink. These are of the utmost historical and technical importance, as they offer a new perspective on the early history of the subject and help us to clarify a number of obscure points in our understanding of the technical aspects of writing in our manuscript heritage.12

Al-Marrākushī’s Al-Azhār fī `Amal al-Aḥbār

The first text is a unique manuscript entitled al-Azhār fī `amal al-aḥbār, written by a Moroccan called Muhammad b. Maymūn b. `Imrān al-Marrākushī al-Ḥimyari. We know nothing about his life, save what can be gleaned from the work itself to the effect that he wrote the book whilst living in Baghdad in the Mustaṣṭiriyya madrasa in 649/1251.13 It is an autograph manuscript, written on contemporary paper in a confident hand, observing the Andalusian-Moroccan conventions of letter curvature whilst adopting the Eastern convention of marking the letters fā’ and qāf with one and two dots above each respectively, as well as marking final bā’, tā’, fā’ and kāf with what resembles a trefoil. However, although the author was able to record and explain his technical experimental work, his knowledge of Arabic is limited. In parts of the text, the meaning is obscure, the grammar is incorrect and the wording erroneous and inconsistent.

In the title and introduction, the author tells us that this work follows on from Maftūḥ al-asrār fī kashf ‘ulām al-aḥbār, of which he tells us in more than one place that he is the author. He also mentions that he is concerned with philosophy (bhikma) and alchemy and the intellectual legacy of Ṭabarī b. Hayyān, a number of whose scattered works he claims to have collected in a work entitled al-Tādābir al-kabīr.

It is clear from the introduction to al-Azhār fī `amal al-aḥbār that a group of the author’s colleagues asked him “to compose a work on the art and knowledge of ink[making] and the exposition of what may be compounded of the five metallic

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10 This was published by Prosper Ricard under the title Sinārat tasbīr al-kutub wa-bāl al-dhahab (Paris, 1919), republished by the same publisher in 1925, and translated by Levey as a supplement to his translation of ‘Umādat al-kutāb (see n.1 above). See also al-Manṣūri, Tārīkh al-wirāq, 86.
11 For titles by these authors, see K. Creswell, A Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts and Crafts of Islam (Oxford, 1961), index.
12 See Zerdoun Bat-Ychouda, Les encrees noires, 124ff, where she states that the first mention of ink in the Muslim world dates from the 3rd/9th century.
13 This madrasa was founded by the Abbasid caliph al-Mustansir bi-lāhā, on the eastern side of Baghdad beside the Tigris. Building work began in 625/1227 and was completed in 631/1234. Valuable collections of books were deposited there (see Ibn al-Fu`ṣī, al-Hawādith al-jamī‘a [Baghdad, 1932], 53), catering for all the madhārib. The building was completely restored in the present century, starting in 1945.
substances (ajşād) \(^{14}\) and silver and gold dust, the way in which colours may be blended, and their use in combination to make beautiful tints for use in writing." He also speaks more generally of the special significance of ink in giving fixed form to the lessons of human experience, especially the Qur'ān and Hadith and the histories of past nations, and enabling the preservation of knowledge and genealogies.

The author acknowledges that in this work he has proceeded on the basis of accepting information transmitted from early scholars, and that time has not permitted him to repeat all their experiments in their entirety, save in a few areas in which he has come to be knowledgeable "by means of scientific surmise and cautious consideration."

The introduction to the book concludes with a detailed list of twenty-seven essays (maqālat), each of which is subdivided into chapters (abwāb). As this is the most detailed exposition of the art of ink-making, we list the contents as they are given:

First Essay: On the preparation of liquid black ink (four chapters)
Second Essay: On the various types of solid (dry) ink, (two chapters)
Third Essay: On the preparation of inks of different colours (eleven chapters)
Fourth Essay: On the preparation of liquid compound ink (two chapters)
Fifth Essay: On the preparation of ordinary dry ink (nine chapters)
Sixth Essay: On the use of inks of different colours (ten chapters)
Seventh Essay: On writing substances prepared from gold and silver and the rest of the five metallic substances (four chapters)
Eighth Essay: On that which is made to resemble gold and silver and the other five metallic substances (four chapters)
Ninth Essay: On that which is written on gold and silver vessels and on implements made of iron, copper and brass (seven chapters)
Tenth Essay: On plating with alloys of the seven [sic] metallic substances, including the production of the plating alloy from its constituent elements and the removal of extraneous substances from the alloy (five chapters)
Eleventh Essay: Remarks on how to write on glass (ten chapters)
Twelfth Essay: On decorating the fingers with colours, and writing in gold and silver on the palm of the hand (eleven chapters)

\(^{14}\) The author lists the “five metallic substances” when he mentions the sub-sections of Chapter Seven as: gold, silver, brass, black lead (usrub) and white lead (rasās, i.e. pewter and/or tin). For these terms, see also the translation and comments of H. Renaud and G. Collin in their edition of Tawfiq al-abbāb fi māhiyyat al-nabāt wa-l-şahāb (Paris, 1934), 20, no. 39.

Thirteenth Essay: On the use of other colours omitted in the varieties which we have discussed so far (ten chapters)
Fourteenth Essay: On the mixing and blending of the colours mentioned so far and the compounds thus produced (four chapters)
Fifteenth Essay: On colour variations in writing according to time and place, how to write on water, which is one of the special skills of the most accomplished scribes (nine chapters)
Sixteenth Essay: On that which disappears [?] entirely whilst the writer writes quickly with it (two chapters)
Seventeenth Essay: On the writing of secrets and the subtle ways of keeping them from the unworthy (two chapters)
Eighteenth Essay: On the means at the writer's disposal for erasing with a knife (seven chapters)
Nineteenth Essay: On making distinctions by rational means, and the distinction between the possible and the impossible concerning that which has been discussed beforehand (seven sections)
Twentieth Essay: On the method of breaking and resealing seals and how to read the books contained therein and fold them (two chapters)
Twenty-first Essay: On the moistening of paper [in the manufacturing process] and how to keep flies off it, as well as [the best methods] arrived at through experimentation for polishing and ageing it (five chapters)
Twenty-second Essay: On how to draw with pens using soot, what the Iqās for them are like and the Iqās for drawing and writing before paint is applied [?] (three chapters)
Twenty-third Essay: A description of the undercoat applied with a pen beneath writing and illumination, as well as the overlay applied to preserve it from the ravages of time (five chapters)
Twenty-fourth Essay: A description of the paints which can be applied to vessels, and drawing on inkwells, pens and pencases and the like (seven chapters)
Twenty-fifth Essay: A description of the correct way to work various kinds of iron (five chapters)
Twenty-sixth Essay: On the tempering of swords, craftsmen's tools and pen-knives, and how to keep them from rusting (six chapters)
Twenty-seventh Essay: On how to erase all of the other colours and inks hitherto discussed (four chapters).

This table of contents certainly arouses the reader's interest to find out important details about how different types of ink were made, how the colours were blended, and the different ways in which texts were decorated, as well as details about the how paper was made, how pens were prepared, and how decoration was permanently fixed on them. It also promises information on how different colours were composed, how
metals were plated, how iron in its various forms, and how it was kept from rusting, as well as how to remove traces of various colours.

However, of this great work planned by al-Marrākushi in 27 essays and their constituent chapters, only the first six essays and the title of the seventh have survived. Nor is there anything missing from the copy, as might be supposed; rather the author, in a manner which I have never come across before, deliberately stops at that point, indicating both indirectly and explicitly that he was undergoing — as we would say in the language of today — an emotional crisis which prevented him from completing the work. He goes on to say that he thought about completing the work, [but instead] compiled al-Ṭadābir al-kabīr from the works of Jābir b. Hayyān, considering this to be a sufficient substitute for, and completion of, the earlier work. However, he recognises that the final work is "closer to the [level of the] scholar than the student" because of the difficulty of its symbolism - in the manner of Jābir - and that it thus needs a commentary to explain it, but he excuses himself from this task on the grounds that life is too short.

So ends the book, but the six surviving essays are rich in themselves, containing one hundred and fourteen recipes for mixing ink, which are, as far as I know, the clearest, most concise and numerous collection extant.

The most distinguishing feature of the book is that it contains recipes for ink attributed to some of the great figures of the Islamic cultural heritage, including those for the inks used by the following scholars and litterateurs: Isā b. 'Umar al-Nahwī (d. 149/766), Muslim b. al-Walīd (d. 208/823), Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Bahr al-Jāhīz (d. 255/968), Muḥammad b. Ismā’īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870), Bakhtyāshī al-Ṭābīb (d. 256/870), Muslim b. Ḥajjāj al-Qushayri (d. 261/875), 'Abd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutayba (d. 276/889), Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā' al-Rāzī (d. 313/925), Muḥammad b. 'Ali b. Muqṭīla (238/940), Abū al-Farāj 'Ali b. al-Husayn al-Iṣḥāḥānī (d. 326/937), Abū Ḥayyān 'Ali b. Muḥammad al-Tawḥīdī (d. ca. 400/1010), 'Ali b. Ḥilāl al-Kātib, known as Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 423/1032), 'Ali b. Hībalt Allāh b. Mākūlā (d. 475/1082) and others. (The author even adds, having described the ink that the waṣīr Ibn Muqṣīla used, that it was an Indian recipe, according to what he was told when he was at the Mūsānqirīyya mardās in Baghdad!) Thus for the first time we come to know about the various types of ink attributed to scholars in the Muslim world.

We may observe that the inks of these scholars have a number of ingredients in common. These are: gallnut,15 vitriol,16 gum arabic17 and fresh water. Some recipes leave out gum arabic, relying on the natural brilliance and permanence of the resultant black compound which needs no additive to make it adhere to paper or parchment. This is the type of ink that was used by Muslim b. al-Walīd, al-Jāhīz and al-Bukhārī.

Despite these inks having these four ingredients in common, there are important differences between them in how they are prepared, the proportions of their ingredients, how they are fire-treated or sun-dried, and how they are pressed and macerated, all of which are quite clearly recorded.

As gallnuts are one of the more or less fixed ingredients on the manufacture of ink, al-Marrākushi gives possible alternatives if they are not available, mentioning decoctions of fresh myrtle, walnut (jauz), pomegranate rind, carob and tamarisk, adding that "they are more effective when added to one another, and even more so if all are used in combination, with the overall strength of the mixture depending on the proportions of the various ingredients."

The author mentions the usefulness of soot in the manufacture of compound inks and describes a device for producing it, whilst pointing out that the best soot is derived from sesame oil, walnut (jauz), hazelnut, seeds or naphtha. In this way, he clarifies what Ḥāmid b. Yūsuf al-Kātib18 relates about the production of the powdered ink which he used to

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15 See Tuhfat al-albāb, 137, no. 309.
16 ibid., 65, no. 144.
17 ibid., 132, no. 296.
18 Known as Abī Ja’far b. al-Dā‘īya al-Baghḍādī al-Misrī, he exercised a ministerial function in the Tulunid state. He died ca. 340/950 (see al-Zirīkī, al-A‘lam [n. p., n. d.], 1, 258; also al-Qalqashandi, Subḥ al-a‘shā, II, 464). It is worth noting that efforts to refine ink were concentrated on maximising the smoothness of the ink on the pen in order to make it run more easily. One worthy attempt in this regard, now lost, was made by the fourth Fāṭimid caliph al-Mu‘azzī b. Dīnī-l-Maḥṣūr, who devised a fountain pen that could be turned in any direction without leaking, and would write in the best manner with put to use and then retain the ink when lifted from the book (see al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān b. Ḥayyān, al-Majālis wa-l-musāyarāt, ed. I. Chabouh et al. [Tunis 1978], 319).
supply during the time of Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn, and confirms the view of the ważīr Ibn Muqla that the best ink was made from naphtha soot.

It is worth pointing out here that in the first six essays the term used changes from ḥibr (first, second and third) to midād (fourth, fifth and sixth), although a close reading of the text reveals no difference between the use of the two terms. Al-Marrākūshī lists the ingredients of ink (ḥibr) as follows: gallnut, vitriol, gum arabic and water, with the possible addition of saffron, musk, Socotra aloes and rosewater (first essay, chapter one). He also describes the contents of white ink as being made up of ceruse, decoction of white gallnut and gum arabic, whilst listing litharge, saffron and gum arabic for red ink. He then describes a compound of midād and ḥibr (sic) as being made up of gallnut, gum arabic, vitriol and water, with the addition of seed soot and a decoction of pomegranate blossom.

This wavering between the two terms begs the question as to whether there is a difference between them. Ahmad al-Maghribī, a scholar of the 11th/12th century, wrote a work entitled Qaf al-azhār fi khassā’is al-ma’ādin wa-l-ahjār, in which he differentiates between the ingredients of the two. According to this work, ḥibr is what derives its colour from vegetable substances whilst midād is what is made from mineral substances. However, the editor of al-Maghribī’s text has arranged this through a deduction which I cannot support, for vitriol, which is a mineral, is contained in all types of ḥibr whilst gallnut, gum arabic and saffron, which are vegetable substances, are included in most types of midād. It appears, then, that this is no more than a lexical confusion between words which had a subtle difference of meaning for the early scholars. For them, the word ḥibr derived from the idea of colour. If it was said of someone, for example, that he was nāṣī’

al-ḥibr, it meant that he was of a pure colour. Another meaning of ḥibr is a mark left on leather; likewise the verb ḥabbara can mean “to beautify”.

As for the term midād, it comes from the idea of it “extending” (yamuddtu), in the sense of “helping” (ya’īnū), the pen, and anything by which something else is extended or helped can be termed midād. For example, oil can be termed thus because the lamp is extended or helped by it. Similarly, any writing substance moistening the inkwell pad (ilqā’a) can be called midād. In the light of this, then, al-Marrākūshī has used the two terms interchangeably, with ḥibr signifying “ink” in a generic sense and midād meaning the same thing by reference to one of the qualities it has.

Al-Marrākūshī’s work is notable for its coverage of the characteristics of substances used in the manufacture of ink, given the author’s practical experience of chemistry. For example, he says of deep black ink with a high vitriol content: “It burns paper because of its high vitriol content, and eats away at the areas which have been written on, cutting right through the paper.” Elsewhere he says about gum arabic: “The only benefit of gum arabic in ink is that it protects the script, should it fall into water, from blurring and smudging”; and that “Gum arabic repels vitriol.”

As mentioned above, the first six essays deal with ink in all its various aspects. Had the author gone on to discuss the issues which he listed as forthcoming in the remaining essays, such as the plating of metals, the tempering of iron and swords and the removal of stains from clothing, one wonders whether the book would have retained the title of al-Azhār fi ‘amal al-ahhāb.

AL-QALALŪSĪ’S TUHAF AL-KHAWĀSS

The second text is rare, and of unusual arrangement, clarity and content. Its author is Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Idrīs al-Qudā’ī al-Qalālūsī, from Estepona in Andalusia. He was born
in 607/1210 and died in 707/1307. This author had a particular advantage over his contemporaries in that he entered the field of history by unusual means. He was originally a teacher of Arabic, and was famous for his detailed knowledge of Sibawayhi's manual of grammar, and was also an authority on poetry and prosody. He put this knowledge to use in his composition of didactic poems, in the Andalusian manner, on inheritance (fara'id) and prosody, as well as a commentary in the same form on the Malā Hilīa of Ibn Durayd, and another on the book of al- Faṣil.

The work which we shall present here is entitled Tuhaf al-khawāṣṣ fi tura'f al-khawāṣṣ, which is mentioned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as follows:26 "The wazīr Ibn al-Hakīm27 was presented with a curious book about the properties [of substances], the manufacture of ink and the [removal of] stains from clothes (tab' al-thiyāb)."28

The manuscript, of which we have a photographed copy, is written in a mediocre maghribi hand, in the Granadan style, with its letter curvature, elongation and contraction. It contains many orthographic errors and interpolations, and the copyist has missed out a few lines. The first half of the work has been affected by damp, rendering some of the manuscript illegible, while parts have been eaten by worms. It was copied in Jumāda I 936 (January 1530). The manuscript is enriched by useful marginal notes and formulae, some of which have been obliterated or are illegible due to the poor quality of the handwriting. They appear to have been added in from other, similar works.

In a short introduction, the author says that he has compiled in this work "an exposition of everything that the writer needs to know, and a corpus of material, ignorance of which would damage the reputation of any student." He also mentions, as stated by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, that he has dedicated the work to the illustrious wazīr Abū 'Abdallāh b. Abī al-Hakīm, and that he has divided the work into three chapters, as follows:

Chapter One: On the prerequisites of scribes, not [normally] appreciated by students
Chapter Two: On matters which are of great benefit but are not easily acquired in full
Chapter Three: Miscellaneous points of interest

This terse division gives little or no impression of the wealth of material contained in the work, for the text itself contains discussions of principles, experiments and prescriptions and gives details of the properties of various types of ink, highlighting the best of them. It also examines materials such as gallnut, gum arabic and vitriol, blotting dust, clay teaching-slates, and inks prepared without gallnut.

In order to clarify the contents of the work further, we shall give a preliminary sketch of the contents to show the author’s balanced approach in dealing with inks, colours, dyes, and the removal of stains from clothing. (As close examination reveals, all of these are logically connected, although they may not appear so at first.)

Chapter One: On the manufacture of inks, the first of which is black (akhab) [p.2]

Section: On materials used in writing, such as ink which cannot be seen [on the page] until treated [p. 10]
Section: On the containers used for carrying ink, inkpads, ammonia and the clay for teaching-slates [p. 12]
Section: On inks containing no gallnut [p. 14]

26 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, al-Ibāta, III, 76.
27 His full name is Abū 'Abdallāh Muhammad b. Abū al-Rahmān b. al-Hakīm al-Lakhtī. He was born in Seville and grew up in Ronda, and was descended from the Banū Hazāj and Banū 'Abbād. He was the secretary of the Sultan of Granada Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Naṣr, to whom he had his son Abū 'Abdallāh al-Makhlīh appointed as minister. When his son died, he was granted this post and became known as "the minister twice over" (dibī al-wazīratayn). He had good handwriting, held knowledge and scholars in high regard, and was keen on collecting books. He was killed in Granada in 708/1309. For biographical notices, see: Ibn al-Khaṭīb, al-Ibāta, II, 444ff, Ibn Hajar, al-Durar al-kāmina (Hyderabad, 1347-50 [1928-31]), III, 495ff; al-Maqari, Aḫtar al-Riḍāy (Cairo, 1538-61/1939-42), II, 340ff.

28 The editor of the Ibāta reads this as wa-l-taṭābбу al-shaib!
29 The manuscript is from the Royal Library in Morocco. I am grateful to Muhammad al-Manṣūrī for drawing my attention to it and to Mohamed Bencherefa for providing me with a copy.

30 The text is not clear. I have read this word as iṭāsa, as a synonym for istabdāda, tawwāna and tīthāra, although it could also be tīthāra, meaning "to take firmly in hand".
in 607/1210 and died in 707/1307. This author had a particular advantage over his contemporaries in that he entered the field of history by unusual means. He was originally a teacher of Arabic, and was famous for his detailed knowledge of Sibawayhi’s manual of grammar, and was also an authority on poetry and prosody. He put this knowledge to use in his composition of didactic poems, in the Andalusian manner, on inheritance (far‘id) and prosody, as well as a commentary in the same form on the Malikî of Ibn Durayd, and another on the book of al-Fâsih.

The work which we shall present here is entitled Tuḥfat al-ḵawāṣṣ fi ṭūaraḵ al-ḵawāṣṣ, which is mentioned by Ibn al-Khatîb as follows:26 “The wazîr Ibn al-Hâkim27 was presented with a curious book about the properties [of substances], the manufacture of ink and the [removal of] stains from clothes (tabl al-thâyâb).”

The manuscript, of which we have a photographed copy,29 is written in a mediocre maghribî hand, in the Granadan style, with its letter curvature, elongation and contraction. It contains many orthographic errors and interpolations, and the copist has missed out a few lines. The first half of the work has been affected by damp, rendering some of the manuscript illegible, while parts have been eaten by worms. It was copied in Jumâdâ I 936 (January 1530). The manuscript is enriched by useful marginal notes and formulae, some of which have been obliterated or are illegible due to the poor quality of the handwriting. They appear to have been added in from other, similar works.

In a short introduction, the author says that he has compiled in this work “an exposition of everything that the writer needs to know, and a corpus of material, ignorance of which would damage the reputation of any student.” He also mentions, as stated by Ibn al-Khatîb, that he has dedicated the work to the illustrious wazîr Abû ‘Abdallâh b. Abî al-Hâkim, and that he has divided the work into three chapters, as follows:

Chapter One: On the prerequisites of scribes, not [normally] appreciated by students
Chapter Two: On matters which are of great benefit but are not easily30 acquired in full
Chapter Three: Miscellaneous points of interest

This terse division gives little or no impression of the wealth of material contained in the work, for the text itself contains discussions of principles, experiments and prescriptions and gives details of the properties of various types of ink, highlighting the best of them. It also examines materials such as gallow, gum arabic and vitriol, blotting dust, clay teaching-slates, and inks prepared without gallnut.

In order to clarify the contents of the work further, we shall give a preliminary sketch of the contents to show the author’s balanced approach in dealing with inks, colours, dyes, and the removal of stains from clothing. (As close examination reveals, all of these are logically connected, although they may not appear so at first.)

Chapter One: On the manufacture of inks, the first of which is black (akbâd) [p.2]

Section: On materials used in writing, such as ink which cannot be seen [on the page] until treated [p.10]
Section: On the containers used for carrying ink, inkpads, ammonia and the clay for teaching-slates [p.12]
Section: On inks containing no gallnut [p.14]

26 Ibn al-Khatîb, al-Ṯâbâ’, III, 76.
27 His full name is Abû ‘Abdallâh Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Rahmân b. al-Hâkim al-Lahmî. He was born in Seville and grew up in Ronda, and was descended from the Banû Hitûjî and Banû ‘Abbâd. He was the secretary of the Sultan of Granada Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Naṣr, to whom he had his son Abû ‘Abdallâh al-Makhîlî appointed as minister. When his son died, he was granted this post and became known as “the minister twice over” (dhî al-wizâratayn). He had good handwriting, held knowledge and scholars in high regard, and was keen on collecting books. He was killed in Granada in 708/1309. For biographical notices, see: Ibn al-Khatîb, al-Ṯâbâ’, II, 444f.; Ibn Ḥaṣân, al-Durar al-kâmîs (Hyderabad, 1347-50 [1928-31]), III, 495f.; al-Maqârî, Azhâr al-Rijâ‘î (Cairo, 1358-61/1939-42), II, 340f.
28 The editor of the Râfî reads this as wa-l-tâṣâbî‘ al-shâbî!
29 The manuscript is from the Royal Library in Morocco. I am grateful to Muhammad al-Manûsî for drawing my attention to it and to Mohamed Bencelifa for providing me with a copy.
30 The text is not clear. I have read this word as iṭâsâa, as a synonym for isti’dâdûa, intâna’a and iṭâda, although it could also be irthâsâ, meaning “to take firmly in hand.”
Section: On how to write with gold, silver, tin, brass, copper, iron and talc [p. 23]
Section: On the types of ink used for writing on gold, silver, brass and lead [p. 27]

Chapter Two: On erasing ink from ledgers and books and removing dye from clothes [p. 28]

Section: On drinks and wines [p. 35]
Section: On the whitening of yarn [p. 38]
Section: On the production of dye for linen garments [p. 40]
Section: On the production of dye for silk garments [p. 41]

Third Essay,\textsuperscript{31} containing useful discussions

Section: On the effect and use of verdigris [p. 46]
Section: On the use of whitewash (bayād al-wajh) [p. 46]
On the use of red lead (zargūn) [p. 47]
On the use of cinnabar [p. 49]
Section: On the production of dyes for wood, bone and brass [p. 50]
Section: On dyes and colours [p. 53]
Section: On substitutes [p. 54]
Section: On those of these dyes which are used in painting and drawing [p. 54]
A mention of those substances which may be used as a base for mixing, and those combinations which go together [p. 54]
A mention of the procedure for grinding dyes [p. 55]
A section on the limitations of dyes after their being ground [p. 56]
A mention of gilding fluid [p. 56]

The material contained in the first chapter all pertains to inks, which are carefully named. The second chapter contains a great deal of information about the ways in which traces of ink can be removed from ledgers, books and clothes. The third chapter, or essay, as the copyist calls it, describes the ingredients of dyes, the ways in which they should be prepared, those which can or cannot be blended, those which are suitable for paper and parchment, and those which are to be used only on wood and on walls.

This interlinking of subject-matter is a rich source of clarification for many aspects of Islamic culture, whether it be
codicology or any other related art such as painting, patterning, colouring and gilding. Indeed, al-Qalâlî’s work is of unique importance in that scarcely any of its contents have been reproduced from the work of his predecessors or contemporaries who wrote in the field, such as the author of *Umdat al-kuttâb*, or Ibn Maymûn al-Marrûkushi, or Ibn Rasûl.

In order to give a clearer idea of the form of al-Qalâlî’s book, we shall quote here a few sample passages from the Royal Library (Morocco) manuscript:

(i) p. 7:

\textit{(from Chapter One: On the manufacture of inks ... )}

This is the procedure for making ink using gallnut, vitriol and gum arabic as described in this blessed table which sets out the contents of each variety of ink and the proportions of their ingredients, as well as the way in which each one is made, God willing:

\textbf{Heat-treated} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Pressed}

Gallnut: one part \hspace{1cm} Gallnut: two parts parts
Vitriol: one quarter part \hspace{1cm} Gum arabic: one part
Gum arabic: one part \hspace{1cm} Vitriol: one tenth part
Water: three parts \hspace{1cm} Water: two parts

\textbf{Macerated} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Powdered}

Gallnut: two parts \hspace{1cm} Gallnut: one part
Gum arabic: half part \hspace{1cm} Gum arabic: one part
Vitriol: one quarter part \hspace{1cm} Vitriol: half part
Water: three parts \hspace{1cm} Water: one part and a half

These are the combinations for the preparation of each one.

We shall now mention their various potencies and effects. The first thing to know is that if the gallnut content exceeds the stated proportions it will quickly hole the paper in writing. If the gum arabic content exceeds the stated proportions [the pages will stick together and the book will tear]. If the vitriol content is too high it will burn right through and ruin the book.

The most important ingredient of ink is gallnut, after which comes gum arabic and then vitriol. The gum is for binding [\textit{7 - word unclear in original}] [the ink] with its strength, and the vitriol is to allow it to

\textsuperscript{31} The author calls them chapters in his introduction. This change could have been introduced by the copyist.
maintain its strength until it reaches the place where it is needed. The following is a list of the effects of these ingredients and their strengths:

The uses of each type of ink

Heat-treated ink is fit for use only with paper
Pressed ink is fit for use with paper and parchment
Macerated ink is particularly suited to parchment
Powdered ink ... is for immediate use on slates

These then are the main features [of the use] of inks.

(ii) p. 53:

Section: On dyes and colours

There are twelve substances which can be used for dyeing: cinnabar, red lead, mughra (russet), white-wash (bayād al-wajh), indigo, lapis lazulae (lāzawār), lac, verdigris, rust/earth (‘akār), arsenic, charcoal, and tarāshūl[?].

These are all the substances which can be used for dyeing. Each colour may be broken down into two, making [a total of] twenty-four.32

[For example], if cinnabar is ground with whitewash, a pink colour results. The same holds for red lead and mughra.

If whitewash is ground with indigo, the result is sky-blue.
If arsenic is ground with indigo, the result is pistachio.
If lac is ground with whitewash, the result is violet.
If saffron is ground with whitewash, the result is lāwbanī[?].
If ‘akār is ground with whitewash, the result is ...
If arsenic is ground with saffron, the result is the colour of old gold.
If indigo, arsenic and cinnabar are ground together, the result is the colour of wild thyme.

These then are the basic substances and what can be derived from them.

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32 This is the number given in the text, although the actual number of combinations listed is only eight. The remainder may have been omitted by the copyist.

(iii) p. 54:

Section: On those of these dyes which are used in painting and drawing

Cinnabar, red lead, mughra, lac, ‘akār, whitewash, charcoal, lapis lazulae, and no others. These can be mixed with oil.

(iv) [pp. 54-5]:

A mention of those substances which may be used a base for mixing, and those combinations which go together

There are four substances which can be used as a base for mixing.
If one is not available, another may be used. They are: whitewash, glue, flax water, and acacia pod, which is gum arabic.
Whitewash is used [as a base] when decorating walls and wood.
Glue is used when decorating painted surfaces or wood.
Flax water is a mixing base when decorating paper or painted surfaces.

I have mastered these mixing bases. When glue is put into cinnabar, lac, ‘akār or sapan wood it holds [it] together, as it does with other things.
When gum arabic is put into red lead it always clogs it up and ruins it. It goes with all [other] dyes, and is used to good effect, in quantity, in the colouring of paper.
As for whitewash, when it is put into ... lac, verdigris, sapanwood or ‘akār it completely ruins them, but it does go with other things.

(v) pp. 53-4:

Section on substitutes

If indigo is not available, use charcoal instead, using it for all cases in which you would need indigo.
Whitewash may be used as a substitute for dyeing paper and decorating walls. If it is not available, use finely ground gypsum instead. When it comes to painting, however, there is no substitute for it.
Pomegranate blossom may be used as a substitute for red lead for paper and parchment. It is of no use, however, in giving colour to paint.
There is no substitute for yellow arsenic.
Red arsenic may be replaced by powdered earth and a little [yellow] arsenic: this can be used instead of it in books and painting. Mughra may be replaced by ink mixed with cinnabar. Cinnabar may be replaced by a mixture of red lead and mughra. Lapis lazulae may be replaced by a mixture of antimony (kuhl al-ithmid) and dye slag.‘Akār may be used instead of lac, if some alum is put into it and it is then left in the sun until it coagulates; it is [particularly] suitable for paper, parchment and painting. Sapanwood may also be used as a substitute for it if it is heated in water until soft — if it protrudes [from the water] immerse it — with the addition of a little alum and gum arabic. This mixture may be used for writing on paper, parchment and also for painting, but if it is used for painting, it is best added to cinnabar.

This is what I wish to present. I believe that all the texts pertaining to codicology should be compiled and arranged chronologically. The technical terms used should be clearly defined, and some of the procedures described should be tested in the laboratory. All of this will then facilitate the writing of the history of Islamic manuscripts, help us to understand the basic materials from which they are constituted, and enable us to proceed with their preservation in the most appropriate manner.

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**THE USE OF PAPER IN ISLAMIC MANUSCRIPTS AS DOCUMENTED IN CLASSICAL PERSIAN TEXTS**

**ĪTRAJ AFŠĀR**

The most important studies in European languages on the history and manufacture of paper (kāghaz)¹ and its use in Islamic manuscripts are those made by von Karabacek, Huart, Babinger, Pedersen, Grohmann, Levey and Sellheim, to which we should add the excellent article in Arabic by Kurkis `Awwād.² These have generally been based on Arabic sources, except for the recent research of Porter which has supplied useful information for Western scholars of Persian, particularly in the field of Persian manuscripts in India.³

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¹ We have preferred to reproduce the Persian pronunciation of this word instead of the more technically correct kāghīd.  
The present article is part of a larger project on the use of paper in Islamic lands based on the study of some forty thousand Arabic and Persian texts in libraries and private collections in Iran and elsewhere over the past forty years. The aim of this article is to draw attention to the importance of references to paper in classical Persian texts in identifying the different types of paper used in Islamic manuscripts.

Terminology

From the time that paper-making became widespread amongst Muslīmān, starting, as we know, in the city of Samarqand, there were always persons and families in many Islamic cities who were called Kāghāzī. This nisba, as Samā’īnī has explained, was due to their families’ present or past involvement in paper-making or dealing. Many such people came from Nīshāpūr, Samarqand, Isfahān, Qazvin, Jūrjan and Shūštart, and are mentioned in the histories of the cities concerned. This nisba first came into vogue before the beginning of the 6th/12th century, while the latest mention of this name that I have come across in classical Persian texts is of al-Hājī Sāliḥ Kāghāzī, a wealthy inhabitant of Shūštart in the 12th/18th century who is mentioned in ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Shūštartī’s Ta’rikh-i Shūštart.

Amongst Iranian cities we find the names Kāghaz Kūnān (formerly Khānāq, renamed in the 8th/14th century) and Kāghāzī, near Kashān. The name Pul-i Kāghāzgarān, which was a bridge near Kūnān, is mentioned by the 9th/15th century poet, Ḍūlār Qulīstānī, in his verses travelogue.

Concerning paper itself and its manufacture, we find terms like kāghāz-būr (paper-cutter, paper-knife) and kāghāz-brūrī (cutting paper, cutting-machine, guillotine). Kāghāz-khāna is the term used by Rashīd al-Dīn Ḍadallāhī Hamadānī (8th/14th century) in al-Waqfīyya al-Rashīdīyya for the paper-making factory of Rab‘i Rashīdī, which he himself founded in Tabrīz. Other terms include kāghāz bālā kārī (gilded paper), kāghāz dūrātārī (cutting paper in two parts by halving its thickness), kāghāz sāz (paper manufacturer), kāghāz sāzī (paper manufacturing), kāghāz shikastan/brūdān (paper-cutting), kāghāz-gar (a paper-maker or dealer), kāghāz-gīr (paper-clip or paperweight), kāghāzī (a paper-maker, stationer; anything covered with a thin skin).

With regard to the quality of the paper, we find terms such as kāghāz-i pāzahīrī (reddish-yellow paper), kāghāz-i daftarī (common paper), kāghāz-i khām (raw or unrefined paper), and kāghāz-i kāhī (strawpaper or newsprint). Similarly, we find terms describing the way the paper has been prepared or the use for which it is intended, such as kāghāz-i āhār muhāra (glazed paper), kāghāz-i abri, kāghāz-i barqī (glossy paper), kāghāz-i tabrīr (writing paper), kāghāz-i charb (smooth paper), and kāghāz-i mashq (exercise or calligraphy paper). There are also many other uses of the word kāghāz in classical texts to describe other uses of paper but, since they do not relate to manuscripts, they need not concern us here.

Methods of paper manufacture

As far as I know, the first literary mention of paper-making occurs in a poem by Manuchīrī Dāmghānī (6th/12th century). In a qaṣīda in which the poet wants to describe a snow-covered desert, he likens it to a Kārgāh-i kāghāz-gāri (paper-workshop):

The land from Balkh to Khāvarān has become like the workshop of Samarqand. The doors, roof and walls of that workshop are like those of painters or paper makers.

This simile derives from the fact that wet sheets of paper were hung on walls or spread on the ground to dry, and a spacious area was needed for this purpose.

A kāghāz-gāri was someone who manufactured paper and, as we have seen, these people were also called kāghāz-sāz and kāghāzī in different centuries. (These terms are to be found in a literary genre known as shahr āshū, a satire on the various social classes of a town.)

Our information about the cities where paper was made is limited. Only hints and allusions are to be found in classical poetry and texts, but they do at least give us the names of those Iranian cities apart from Samarqand where paper was made. The earliest of these sources dates from the early 7th/13th century.

Paper from Samarqand was highly sought after and enjoyed wide renown from the 4th/10th to the 13th/19th centuries. The oldest information that we have about paper-making in this city is found in the geographical work Hudud al-ilm min al-mashriq ila al-maghrib, written in 371/981-2, in which we find the
following important reference to this aspect of Samārquand’s economic activity:

And from it comes paper which is taken all over the world.4

Paper was also made in Isfahān until 70 years ago. We also know from Mabāsin-i Isfahān, written by Mafarrūkhī early in the 8th/14th century and translated into Persian by a scholar of Aveh, that at that time paper was manufactured in Isfahān in the kāghaz-i Rashidi (Rashidi paper) style. The translator adds:

He wrote the praise of his favours on sheets of Rashidi paper which he manufactured for his literary works and to revive the books of the great scholars of the past. From the point of view of clarity of sheet, size and format, softness and cleanliness, firmness, evenness and varnishing, paper of such quality does not, and did not, exist in any kingdom after Isfahān.5

Isfahānī paper was distributed to every city and was of consistently good quality. One of the good quality papers of this city in the 7th/13th century was chahār baghal (large-size paper), which sold for six Abbāsīs (a type of coin named after Shāh Abbās Safavi) per sheet. Husayn Tahwīldār, the writer of Ijţahdīya-i Isfahān, mentions this with astonishment, saying: “However, some prefer the paper of Khānibūgh (Peking) to this paper.” This indicates that these two papers were almost similar in quality. Another famous paper of that city was kāghaz-i fustuqī, being pistachio-coloured.

As we have seen above, there were workshops for the manufacture of paper mixed with water near the town known as Rab‘i Rashidi. We have also seen that Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallah mentioned this place in the deed of endowment known as al-Waqfīyya al-Rashidiyya. He also mentions the paper of this place in his Sawānīb al-afkār, which is a collection of his correspondence with the rulers of his day, and also in the preface to his Lajūfī al-haqqīq. The paper made in this city was of large size and of the Baghdādī type.

Qazvīn was another centre for the manufacture of paper in Iran. We read in Tadhkīra-i shī‘a-ri Kashmīr that the Sultan of

Kashmir, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (823-75/1420-70), brought some paper-manufacturers from Qazvīn to Kashmir. Thus established, paper replaced tūz (a kind of bark) as a writing material, an event which is mentioned by Mullā Nadīm Kashmīrī in the following verse:

Paper became a booklet and was bound, when time threw away the tūz from the book.

Kāghaz Kunān, near Zanjān, was for a short while a renowned centre of paper-making. Hamdallah Mustawfi mentions in Nuzhat al-qulūb (9th/15th century) that the place became known as Kāghaz Kunān because good paper was made there. This town, which was ruined during the period of the Mongols, was, according to the same source and also Mu‘jam al-buldān, previously known as Khānaj. The new name still survives.

According to Miḥrābī’s Tadhkīrat al-awliyya (10th/16th century), paper mills also existed in Kirmān, near the town’s khandaq (ditch). We also find references in two 10th/16th century histories of Yazd to the jāhīna-i kāghaz-gari (paper-mill) and the bānī-i kāghazi (paper shop) of Fāraj-i Yahūdī. There is still a lane named Kūchā-i Kāghazgāri in the oldest part of the city.

Concerning the manufacture of paper in Khurāsān, the most reliable document is the Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadīm. This tells us that paper was made in Khurāsān from the very beginning of paper-making in Iran and also mentions the names of the types of paper produced. Although for the purposes of this article I have restricted myself to Persian sources, I feel this last point deserves some amplification.

Ibn al-Nadīm mentions six kinds of paper. The names of five of them are connected with Khurāsān and Transoxiana, while the remaining one relates to Egypt. The Egyptian one is known as kāghaz-i Pir‘awī ("Pir‘awī paper"). The other five are Sulaymānī (from Sulaymān b. Rashīd, a minister of financial affairs in Khurāsān), Ja‘far (from Ja‘far b. Barmakī), Taḥīr (from Taḥīr b. Tāhirī, Taḥīrī (from Tāhirī II of the same dynasty, which ruled in Khurāsān) and Nūḥ (from Nūḥ b. Nasr al-Samḥānsī). It is therefore clear that paper was manufactured in Khurāsān, to which we can add that different types of good Khurāsānī paper appear to have been named after high government officials who liked them.
From these references and other indications that kāghazī families lived in Bayhaq and Nishapūr, and the mention of Pahlavi Kāghazgarān in the poetry of Nizārī Qubistānī, as well as the information which Porter derives from the text of Bihirnāman regarding papermills in Herat, we can be sure that paper-making spread over the whole region having first started in Samarkand.

The latest reference we have to paper-making in Khurasān dates from the period of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (13th/19th century). This occurs in the census of the area prepared by Zayn al-Ābidīn from which we learn that one of the local trade associations was the paper-makers' guild.

Our technical information regarding the tools and machinery used in paper manufacture is very limited, being based on a few textual allusions. We know that Rashid al-Dīn Fadlallāh brought a group of Chinese artisans to his kāghaz-khāna in Rab‘i Rashīdī and he wrote down the information he obtained regarding Chinese paper in his Āthār va ahyā‘. Referring to the differences between Chinese and Tabrizi paper, he mentions that in China paper was made from the bark of the mulberry tree and also sometimes from silk, whilst in Iran it was made from rags and cotton.

Fortunately, we have more information about the Safavid period, especially from references in the works of Sabk-i Hindī (Indian style) poets who appeared in this era, and who often took inspiration from mundane affairs. Paper featured in their poetic images, such as in Tūghrī-i Mashhādī’s mention of qālib-i kāghaz (paper-making mould):

So many of my love letters to the youth have been rejected that cracks appear in the paper like the cracks of the paper-mould (qālib-i kāghaz).

Of the many verses in which paper is mentioned, I shall quote just three couplets by the 10th/16th century poet ‘Abdī Bīk Shirāzī, otherwise known as Navidī, taken from his matnāvī Jawhar-i fard, composed in praise of cotton: Paper derives its existence from it, as if revelation had descended on it. Indian paper is angry with Chinese paper and has informed

Wāṣif about Byzantium and Zanzibar. Sometimes it manifests itself from the land of Cathay, and sometimes it brings news from Samarkand.

Muhammad Shāfi‘i Hamadānī (12th/18th century) conveys similar meanings in his shahr āshūb. He mentions the terms kāghaz-i Khāṭā‘ī va Kashmīrī (Chinese and Kashmiri papers), saḥbāf (bookbinder), muhra kashdīan (paper-glazing), nishasta (starch) and āhār dādan (to starch), all of which are connected to the manufacturing of paper. Hamadānī also refers implicitly to the method of making paper from cotton wool.

The author of Gulzar-i Kashmirī (13th/19th century), who supplies information about the manufacture of paper in Kashmir, says that linen rags were first turned into dough with sal ammoniac and that this dough was then cast into a panjara-i chahār khāna (frame divided into four parts) and a dām (trap), after which the paper was then glazed or smoothed.

During the Safavid period, paper-makers were considered to constitute their own guild, which explains why they are mentioned as writers of shahr āshūb. In the earliest shahr āshūb, composed by Mas‘ūd Salmān (6th/12th century), there is of course no mention of any kāghaz-gar (paper manufacturer) although painters and calligraphers are mentioned. However, Safavid examples of the genre, such as the shahr āshūb by Lišānī Shirāzī (10th/16th century) and Tahir Wāhid Qazvīnī (11th/17th century) include interesting couplets on paper manufacture. The following is an example from the work of Lišānī Shirāzī:

I shall buy paper to make a garment for seeking justice from you; wearing it, I shall make my petition of complaint.

Fortunately, Tahir Wāhid makes metaphorical mention of the paper mill and workshop in his poetry. He likens the papermaker to a baker who makes paper sheets instead of bread, and who has water instead of fire in his oven (the word for a baker's oven is tannūr, while the place in a paper mill where the water is poured is called a tannūrā‘).

As this bread is baked by water instead of fire, the book fills its belly with this bread.

6 Porter, Peinture, 25.


8 A city in Iraq once famous for its reed pens.
The colour of paper

Our information about the colouring and glazing of paper is more complete because of specialised treatises and monographs that exist on the subject.9

The oldest Persian work containing references to the dyeing of paper is Bayān al-ṣināʿāt, by Ḥubbaysh Tīfīsī (d. ca. 600/1203-4),10 which means that this process is at least eight centuries old. Dāwlat Shāh Samarqandī (9th/15th century), in his Tadhkira, mentions the art and mastery of Ẓimī Nishābūrī, the author of an important treatise on paper-dyeing known as the Jawhar-i Simī which has recently been edited and published by Porter.11

There was much variety in paper-dyeing, and, although his claim seems exaggerated, Ḥūdī Ḥtāmī says in Gulistān-i hunar that Maulānā Muhammad Aḥmad Jāvvalkash ("paper-ruler") “used to colour paper in seventy colours.”

To mention all the names of the colours used to describe paper in poetry and prose would make this paper unnecessarily lengthy. The list prepared by Porter12 is based on Jawhar-i Simī, Khushnavisi, Ṣajjānī al-ṣanāʿī and Bayād-i Khūshbāy. In the list in my forthcoming monograph on the subject, I have also used Gulistān-i Khiṣārī, early librarians’ or owners’ authentications (card) of title pages of manuscripts, and Ganjīnā-ī Shāykh Šafi (Ardabil catalogue), as well as the technical terms taken from catalogues of the Qājār period. I have also highlighted any differences between my list and that of Porter, such as the two colour terms listed by Porter as khāṭāt and zamurūd-i limūt, which are orthographically incorrect: the first should read binnā’ī and the second zar-i limūt (lemon-yellow).

Colours used for dyeing paper were either simple or compound. Those which were most in demand were āl (reddish-yellow), binnā’ī (reddish-orange), limūt (lemon-green), fustuq (pistachio) and nukhūdī (buff). It was generally believed that pure white paper was harmful to the eyes in bright conditions and that coloured paper was more suitable.

In the Safavid period, āl and binnā’ī were the colours used for good quality paper. Lisānī Shīrāzī says about āl-coloured paper:

I had rosy āl paper in my room, reminding me of flowers and the face of my beloved.

The poets of the period composed many verses in praise of binnā’ī paper. The following is but one example, from a couplet by Vā’īz Qazvīnī in which he compares its colour with that of the hand of the beloved:

Your colour, because of its freshness, is like Chinese satin, and your hand, due to its gentleness, is like binnā’ī paper.

At this point, one ought to discuss kāghaz-i abrī (a kind of thick, glossy paper) and its importance in calligraphy. However, space does not allow in an article of this sort, and a significant amount of research has already been published on this subject, particularly two recent articles in Persian, one by Muhammad Ḥasan Sīmsār in Dāʾīrat al-maʿārif-i buzurg-i islāmī and one by Yāhya Zakā in the journal Ayandeh.13 We shall therefore confine ourselves here to the brief mention that references to kāghaz-i abrī can be found in the poetic works of Kalīm Kāshānī, Sālim Tehrānī, Sāʿīb Tabrizī, Vā’īz Qazvīnī and dozens of other poets. The following couplet is typical of such poetic references:

You should know that without you I weep tears in a hundred colours and make the kāghaz-i abrī variegated.

References to the technique of polishing paper with a starch glaze go back to the 6th/12th century. One such occurs in Farrukhnānā-ī Jamālī, written in 580/1184-5 by Jamālī Yazdi, in which the rice-starching method is mentioned.14 Another is in a verse by Sūzānī Samarqandī (d. 562/1166-7), in which the poet

9 There is an introductory article on such works by Muhammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, who has also published some of them. Others have been published by Ahmad Gulehīn Maʿānī, Rūḥānī Māyīl Heravi, Fikrī Saljuqī, Pārīz Aḵzāī and, more recently, Y. Porter.
10 Ḥubbaysh Tīfīsī, Bayān al-ṣināʿāt, ed. I. Afsāhār, FIT, VI (Tehran, 1336/1957), 298-457.
12 Porter, Penmanship, 49-50.
comparing the bright and waterproof feathers of the stork with polished and glazed paper:

He saw the feathers of the stork as polished and glazed paper.

Glazed paper was of good quality and was popular with calligraphers because the pen moved softly over it. The famous calligrapher Sulṭān ‘Ali Mashhadi devoted seven couplets of his famous treatise to the method of glazing paper, which was usually done by hand. In 912/1506, however, Muhammad Ḥāfiz Isfahāni claimed to have invented a device which facilitated this procedure, the only known reference to which is in his Naẓīṯat al-
dawla.¹⁵

Varieties of paper

One of the most significant considerations in the codicology of Islamic manuscripts is the recognition of different types of paper. Catalogue references usually deal only with the paper's colour and thickness, whilst I have been able to glean the names of various types of paper from the texts themselves. Furthermore, latter day cataloguers in many eastern countries have generally named the papers on the basis of resemblance and hearsay, sometimes going against the facts of history. For example, having studied the entries in the Catalogue of the Kitābkhāna-i Millī-i Malik, I can say that Qur'ān no. 15, copied by Yaqt al-
Musta’sīmi in 680/1281-2, cannot have been written on Dawlatabādi paper because this type of paper is not mentioned in the sources before the 11th/17th century. The paper of another Qur'ān (no. 44), written in early naskhī script, has also been incorrectly classified as Dawlatabādi. Qur'ān no. 46, written in Kufic script, is described as having been written on tirmā-i Khāṭā’t, and the term tirmā is certainly not nine hundred years old. These few examples lead me to believe that in speaking of the types of paper used in manuscripts, relying on the commonly used terms is imprudent.

The only correct criteria by which we can identify types of paper are those instances where librarians or owners of Arabic,

Persian and Turkish manuscripts have written an ‘aṣr (authentication and registration) on the manuscript. These include the title and visible features of the manuscript and generally the type of paper used. If the date of the ‘aṣr and the date of the calligraphy are close to each other, it can be assumed that the name of the paper is that which was in vogue at the time of writing. Such terms can be found in certain catalogues for early periods, such as the Ardabīl Catalogue, which was compiled in 1172/1758-9 and has been published under the title Ganjin-i Shāykh Ṣafī.¹⁶ I have counted eleven types of paper mentioned in this work.

Fortunately, an inventory of the Ganjin, apparently prepared around 1307/1889-90, has recently been published by Shahriyār Dīrgāhām, but this only supplies references to deerskin, tirmāh, and Khāṇbālīghī and Khāṭā’t paper. Although a few Qur'āns in both catalogues are almost identical, their specific features are described differently in each. In my monograph I have sought to highlight these differences, as well as listing the terms and types of paper mentioned in the catalogue.

From the point of view of the old sources (including the Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadim and historical and literary works in Persian), the terms used to describe different types of paper fall into three categories:

Terms that refer to the place where the paper was made:

-e.g. Isfahānī, Baghdadī, Dawlatabādī, Samarqandī, Shāmī and Hindi. Of these, Samarqandī and Shāmī paper are worthy of further mention.

Samarqandī was the most famous kind of paper. We refer to references to it from the 4th/10th century onwards, the earliest being in Ḥudūd al-‘alam, where the author says that Samarqand is the abode of Manicheans and that paper is produced there and from there taken all over the world.¹⁷ The second earliest source is Ṣafarana-i Nṣīr-i Khusraw (d. 481/1088), in which it is mentioned that the people of Ṣarābulus in Shām (present-day Tripoli in Lebanon) made paper of as good a quality as that of Samarqand or even better. This paper continued to be traded for centuries in Iran. It is mentioned in Rīsāla-i muṣarrif-i kārvansarādā-i ‘aṣr-i Šafā’ī ("The Caravanserais of the Šafavid


¹⁶ Ganjin-i Shāykh Ṣafī (Ardabīl Catalogue), (Tabriz, 1980).

¹⁷ See n. 4 above.
Period", British Museum MS 9024), in which we are told that people from Samargand sold paper in Mahmud Beik's caravanserai. The poet of that era, Muhsin Ta'thirat, praises the high quality of Samargandi paper in the following way:

When I write the praise of thy lips the letter becomes a garland. If the paper is daftari [low quality] it becomes Samargandi.

Persian-speaking poets have talked much about Shamí paper, especially in the 9th-10th/15th-16th centuries. For instance, Amir-i Khusraw Dihlawi mentions it in his Ghurrat al-kamal, as well as providing useful information about making paper from silk in 20 couplets in his Qiran al-sa'dayn. Another poet of the same period, Shiruji Sagzi, implies in one of his verses that Shamí paper was white. Similarly, Amir-i Khusraw compares it with morning:

When your face rose like the morning sun, the colour of my face turned yellow, like Shamí paper decorated with saffron water.

Terms that relate to specific persons; e.g. Jayhani, Sa'di, Rashidi, Talhi, Adilshahi, Mansuri and Nuh. Here we shall say a little more on Sa'di and Adilshahi paper, both of which were of good quality.

Reference to Sa'di paper occurs in the divâns of two poets. One is Sûzanî Samargandi and the other is 'Abd al-Wâsi' Jabali of Gharjistân (d. 555/1160). From the mention of Sa'di paper in the poetry of these two poets, both of whom lived in the same region, it is evident that this type of paper was well-known and highly valued in Khurasân, and perhaps derived its name from a person of high rank such as Sa'd al-Mulk or Sa'd al-Din. Sûzanî says:

I was given two quires of Sa'di paper by Shihâb al-Din Ahmad, by order of Khwaja Mu'ayyad.

'Abd al-Wâsi' speaks of this type of paper in the following way:

I have a Zandani [18] and paper. Both are good but both have defects: the first is not Bû Ishaqî [cloth], and the second is not Sa'di.

The famous calligrapher of the Safavid period, Mir 'Imad Qazvinî, preferred this type of paper to Dawlatâbâdi paper, both being from India. He also praised 'Adilshahi paper in his Adab al-mashh:

'Adilshahi, having fewer grains, is the best paper. So excellent is Adilshahi paper that the artist considers it a thomless flower. Its value is known to my pen, whose bestowal scatters the most precious pearls. After that, Dawlatabâdi, also called Sultanî, is good.

A manuscript whose paper is 'Adilshahi according to its ard is 'Ahrâm-i Hadrat-i Amir [i.e. 'Ali ibn Abi Taleh], written for Sultan Ibrahim, the son of Shârûkh (3rd/9th century). In the ard, dated 1046 AH (1636-7), the paper is described as qat' wasaj-i kaghaz-i 'Adilshahi ("Adilshahi paper in medium format").

Terms that relate to the ingredients, type of usage, and/or size of the paper; e.g. abrishami, châhär baghal, tughrâ'i and, perhaps, Mansuri.

As regards Mansuri paper, we find paper of such a type mentioned in the Qâbânsâma (5th/11th century) in an anecdote concerning Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi. (We should note here that in some manuscripts Mansuri paper is referred to as kaghaz-i Mansuri (Mansuri paper) while in others it is referred to as kaghaz-i qat' i Mansuri (paper in Mansuri format).) It is certain that this kind of paper derives its name from either Abu Mansur 'Amir (495-524/1110-30) or to Mansur b. Nasr 'Abd al-Rahim Kaghazi, who was himself a paper-manufacturer. Grohmann also considered durj-i Mansuri (mentioned in Sâhi's Tuhfât al-umârâ') to have been named, like Mansuri paper, after Abu Mansur 'Amir.

In a manuscript of badîth (Tâj al-Din's Arba'în, written in the 8th/14th century) which I have seen in the Peking Mosque,

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18 A type of cloak (khiraq).
Masūrī paper is mentioned as a superior paper in that it was used for writing in gold: "Now they write in gold on Masūrī paper."

We should therefore conclude that there were two kinds of Masūrī paper in use in Islamic lands, differentiated by format and quality.

Miscellaneous points

The diversity of terms used to describe the quality of paper and its trade and use is amply evident from the references in classical texts.

Amongst the more common terms is tabaq (leaf), which is seen in texts of prose and poetry from the 6th/12th century onwards. It is mentioned, for example, in Al-Tawassul ilā al-tarassul by Bahā’ al-Dīn Muhammad, the secretary of ‘Alī al-Dīn Takī al-Majīshān, and al-Tawassul ilā al-tarassul by Rashīd al-Dīn Fadlallāh Hamadānī (d. 718/1318). The wording of a remark in the latter work may indicate the size of a tabaq:

When he wanted to improve the maps, he thought it necessary to increase the size of the paper on which they were drawn ... so he made big sheets of paper, each one being the size of six sheets, and then he drew those maps on them.

The following is a brief list of decorative techniques mentioned in historical and literary texts:

- abraj kardan: variegating the paper
- afshān kardan: smearing the paper with splashes of gold and silver water or henna
- pāk kardan: removing of earlier writing for re-use, removing of stains from paper
- tadhhīb va tash‘īr: illumination
- jadwal kashī: ruling and marking out columns
- do pūst kardan: slicing the paper by halving its thickness
- rang kardan: dyeing
- qaṭā‘ī: cutting
- kuluft kardan: thickening
- kuhna kardan: ageing
- majlis kashī: miniature painting

Masṭar kashī: making invisible lines for straight writing
Muhra kashī: glazing
Wasḥī: rebinding an old book.

For example, one poet wrote, using the word masṭar:

One who would prescribe the manners of asceticism should rule (masṭar zadan) his body with the design of the rush mat.

Mehrebān Aurangābādī mentions the word afshān in the following line:

What is the need to speak of my condition, O messenger? The letter has been smeared (afshān) with the blood of my heart.

Finally, what we know about the trade of paper and its price in different periods can also assist us sometimes in identifying the type of paper used in manuscripts. For example, paper made in Khurasan and Isfahān was often used in India, whilst various types of Indian paper were brought to Iran, and most of these can be identified in Persian manuscripts.

It is my hope that this short article has demonstrated the importance of the Persian literary tradition as a source for the history of paper and the identification of its various types.
EARLY METHODS OF BOOK COMPOSITION:  
AL-MAQRIZI'S DRAFT OF THE  
KITĀB AL-KHĪTĀT  

AYMAN FU‘ÀD SAYYID

Topography, a variety of regional geo-history, was known in many parts of the Islamic world. Introductions to historical accounts of Islamic cities, such as al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī’s Tārīkh Baghdād, Ibn ’Asākir’s Tārīkh Dimashq and Ibn Shaddād’s al-A’lāq al-khaṭīfī fī dhikr umara al-Shām wa-l-Jazīra, contained topographical descriptions of these cities. However, this art was especially well developed in Islamic Egypt, where, at the hands of al-Kindī, Ibn Zālīq, al-Qudī, al-Sharīf al-Jawwānī, Ibn ’Abd al-Zāhir and Ibn al-Mutawwaj, the art of topography reached the maturity shown in Maqrizī’s book, al-Mawā’iz wa-l-i‘tāb bi-dhikr al-khītāt wa-l-āthār, which is considered by far the best example of topographical writing.1

By scholarly consensus this book is the most important about the history of Egypt and the topography of her cities in the Islamic period. It is the only book extant that offers us a full account, from original sources, of the history of Egypt and the foundation and growth of her main cities from the Muslim conquest until the middle of the 9th/15th century. It is also considered indispensable for the study of the archaeology of Islamic Egypt. It provides us with a detailed list and accurate description of palaces, mosques, schools, khānqāhs, quarters, districts, houses, baths, tradesmen and shopkeepers’ estates, inns, hotels, markets and caravanserais in the capital of Egypt over a

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period of nine centuries. The list was based in the first place on al-Maqrizi's personal observations, as well as on other sources which have not survived. Al-Maqrizi thus has preserved for us important material by ancient authors which would otherwise have been lost.

The author of this book is the illustrious scholar Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbás Ahmad b. 'Ali 'Abd al-Qadir b. Muhammad al-Maqrizi al-Shafi'i (766/845-1364/1442), chief historian of Islamic Egypt and author of extensive works about her history and civilisation such as Ittižāl al-hunūdī fi akhābār al-a’mmā al-Fātimiyin al-khulūsī, al-Sultān li-mustafat duwal al-mulūk, al-Muqaffa al-kabīr, Durr al-`uqūd al-fārīda and other works.2 Al-Maqrizi's al-Mawâ'iz wa-l-lū`bār, otherwise known as his Khitaṭ, is among his most important works and is undoubtedly one of the best examples of the genre of topographical writing.

He begins with an account of Egypt's different regions and cities, which occupies about one quarter of the book. He then concentrates his attention on a description of Cairo, which, after the fall of Baghdad and the retreat of Muslim rule in Spain, had become the cultural and political centre of the Islamic world.

In this section al-Maqrizi gives a detailed account of everything that has to do with Cairo, his birthplace. Every relic and institution is described with extreme accuracy, with the history of their construction and any subsequent change given at length. Biographies of rulers and notables who built them or lived in them are given, as are the important events, traditions, customs and ceremonies associated with them, so much so that, in the words of Quatremère, "We possess no work on any town of the Orient as complete and as interesting [as is the Khitaṭ on Cairo]."

The material provided by al-Maqrizi in the course of his historical account of Cairo and its development draws its importance from the value and variety of his sources. Indeed a great portion of the material which he preserved for us would otherwise have been lost and without him a large part of Egypt's history would have remained unknown to us.

The sections in which al-Maqrizi describes the system of kharij, the collection of taxes and the allocation of fiefs (iqra), as well as the entire section dealing with the Fatimids and the foundations of Cairo, are regarded as the most original and valuable sections of the Khitaṭ. Indeed, he is considered to be the most important Egyptian historian to write about the Fatimids, for he held it impossible to write a history of Egypt without according them their rightful place as the founders of Cairo and the ones who gave Egypt its important strategic position in the area. It is thus not surprising that his account of the Fatimids and the Cairo of their time occupies nearly half his book. In this context it is of interest to note that al-Maqrizi's description of Qal'at al-Jabal, the capital of the Ayyubids and later their successors the Mamlukes, who ruled Egypt in his day, does not match in its quality and sources his description of Cairo under the Fatimids.

The esteem in which Arab authors and scribes held this book is attested to by the existence of over 170 manuscript copies in libraries throughout the world. Of these, 35 are in libraries in Istanbul, 28 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and ten in the British Museum in London. These figures are far in excess of those for any other Arabic book. This is so despite the fact that the editor of the 1852 Bûlãq edition of the book, relied on by researchers to date, complains that manuscripts of the book are rarely to be found in Egypt, and that the few that exist are full of "grave alterations, omissions and errors."4

Nineteenth century researchers were well aware of the importance of the book. The presence of many manuscript copies in Paris, Leiden and London attracted the attention of orientalists who consulted it and quoted it at length in their writings about the history of Islamic Egypt. They also translated and published certain chapters from it, especially Langlès, Silvestre de Sacy, Quatremère and Wüstenfeld.5

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4 al-Maqrizi, Kitâb al-Mawâ’iz wa-l-lū’bār bi-dhikr al-khitaṭ wa-l-lū’bār (Bûlãq, 1270/1852), II, 520. This shows that these copies of the book were taken out of Egypt to the libraries of Turkey and Europe before the Bûlãq edition was produced.

5 E.g. L. Langlès, "Histoire du Canal de Mesr (vulgairement nommé Canal de Suez) tirée de la description géographique et historique de l'Égypte par ar al-Maqrizi”, Magasins Encyclopédiques, V/1 (Paris, 1799), 289-310; idem, "Le livre des avis et sujets de réflexions [= al-Maqrizi, K. ...
The complete 1852 edition of the book was among the first produced by the Büläiq Press. Unfortunately it is not always reliable as it contains many errors and omissions deriving from the original manuscript sources used. However, it continues, in the absence of any more accurate edition, to be the basis for all studies dealing with the history and topography of the cities of Islamic Egypt. It was this edition that Ravaisse, Salmon, and Casanova used in their studies of the main cities of Islamic Egypt, as also did Van Berchem and Wiet in their description of Arabic inscriptions in Egypt, and Creswell in his description of the Muslim architecture of Egypt.

In view of the importance of the book and the richness and variety of its subject-matter and sources on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the extent of the errors and distortions which plagued the only complete edition of it, Wiet set about producing a complete revised edition of the book. He began the project in 1911, only to give up in 1927 having produced five sections, i.e. the equivalent of pp. 2-322 of volume one of the Büläiq edition.

He must have been daunted by the enormous number of manuscripts he was able to collect, all of which also contained numerous errors and omissions.

The draft of al-Maqrizi’s Khiṣāṭ

Luckily the Khazîna library, attached to the Museum of the Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, is in possession of the first draft (no. 1472) of al-Maqrizi’s Khiṣāṭ. This draft represents al-Maqrizi’s first conception of the book and differs greatly in its arrangement, sources and extent of information from the final version of the Khiṣāṭ as represented by the Büläiq edition. Indeed, only a relatively small part of it is the same.

This draft is one of the few extant texts which give us a glimpse into earlier scholars’ methods of book composition. We have a number of works in their own authors’ hand but it is very rare that we come across their draft copies. A draft is usually undertaken by the author during his collection of material for the book. It is like a skeleton of the book in which he can make changes by adding, omitting or changing the sequence of material. In this way it falls well short of the complete version that the author finally achieves.

It is well-known that the quality of long-hand copies of a given book varies considerably, some of them being of no value whatsoever for the correction of the text, while others may be invaluable in this respect. The function of an editor is to evaluate and compare copies in accordance with the accepted rules of editing and publishing early books. Among these are that a copy in the author’s own hand is the most valuable of all; then copies that have been read out to the author or marked by him; then copies that have been checked against other copies and have then circulated among scholars and been authorised by them; finally, old copies take precedence over new copies.

There are exceptions, however, to this last rule. When, in 1914, Nicholson published the book of al-Luma’ fi tašāwuf, by Abî Naṣr ‘Abî Abdallah b. ‘Ali b. Muḥammad b. Yahyâ al-Sârâj al-Ṭūsî (d. 378/988), he relied on two manuscripts, one written in 548/1153 and the other in 683/1284, using the later version as his main source. This was because it was complete whereas the older one was defective in almost one-third of the book, with the rest being arranged in an incomprehensible way.
Nicholson only used the older version for purposes of comparison in his editing of the later text.10

Some books are written over two stages. The first consists of a draft which the author writes in the course of his gathering of the material for his book, while the second consists of the fair copy in which the author revises what he wrote in the draft, correcting mistakes, re-ordering chapters and making various insertions in the text.

The draft of al-Maqrizi's Khiṭat in the Khazīna library is a unique specimen of an author's draft, and invaluable for acquainting us with the way in which early scholars composed books. The manuscript contains a great deal of deletion, scraping off and crossing out as well as numerous long additions in the margins and on scraps (taḏyārat) inserted between the sheets of the book. It also shows alterations of some texts and notes to remind the author to move certain sections to a more appropriate place in the text. We also find reminders for the author to finish the copying of certain texts left incomplete, or to refer to new sources that he came across after finishing the draft.

Did al-Maqrizi plagiarise al-Ahwādī?

This particular draft is also of use in settling an issue that has vexed scholars interested in al-Maqrizi's Khiṭat. By this I mean al-Sakhāwī's accusation that al-Maqrizi plagiarised the draft by his neighbour al-Ahwādī on the same subject, correcting it and enlarging upon it and then attributing it to himself.11 The draft of al-Maqrizi's Khiṭat as well as what he himself wrote about al-Ahwādī can help us to arrive at a sound judgement as to whether al-Sakhāwī's accusation is true or not.

Although in his introduction to the Khiṭat, in which he lists all those predecessors of his who wrote topographical descriptions of Egypt and Cairo, al-Maqrizi fails to mention his two contemporaries Ibn Dūḏmāq and al-Ahwādī, he was full of praise for the latter in his biographical notice about him in his

Durar al-ʿuqūd al-fārida. He also acknowledges his familiarity with the draft of al-Ahwādī's work and the benefit he drew from it. Furthermore, he mentions al-Ahwādī's knowledge of Egypt's history and Cairo's topography and then goes on to say, "I copied from him a number of accounts and learnt much from him on the subject of history and was fortunate to come across drafts written in his own hand dealing with the topography of Cairo which I included in my large book entitled al-Mawāʾiẓ wa-l-iṭibār fī dhikr al-khiṭat wa-l-āthār. He also gave me a copy of his collected poems in an elegant volume."12

This acknowledgement proves the point that is often repeated in al-Sakhāwī's writings, namely that al-Ahwādī was the author of a substantial draft, into which he put a great deal of effort, on Cairo's topography. However, at the same time it acquits al-Maqrizi of the charge of plagiarism levelled against him by al-Sakhāwī and about which many other scholars have had their doubts. Nevertheless, the inevitable question is, if al-Maqrizi made use of al-Ahwādī's draft, as he admits, and included material from it in his Khiṭat, why does he not cite it among his sources in his introduction? And why does he not refer to it in those places in his book where he has made such use of it?

One possible answer would seem to be that al-Ahwādī wrote a draft of his own Khiṭat of Cairo and perhaps revised parts of it at the time when his neighbour al-Maqrizi was pursuing the same interest. It may also have been that al-Ahwādī was at pains to hide the sources of his information from al-Maqrizi. However, when al-Ahwādī died in 811/1408 without having completed or revised his book, al-Maqrizi obtained it in draft form and was thus able to find out his sources and the libraries he used and to consult them personally. All these borrowings were then incorporated into his own draft, as seen in the many scraps between the sheets of his book as well as the lengthy marginal notes which he added to it, all of which were texts which were attributed to their original sources and which helped him to reclassify his book and provided him with very valuable material. Most of the texts which he took from al-Ahwādī's book are attributed to Ibn Zūlqāb, al-Musabbihi, Ibn al-Maʿmūn, Ibn al-Sayrafi, the Kitāb al-Dhakhāʾir wa-l-īʿādād, and the commentary


11 al-Sakhāwī, al-Dawʾ al-limān, 1, 358-9, and 2; idem, al-Tibr al-masbiḥ, 22; idem, al-Tibr bi-l-tawbihā (Beirut, 1399/1979), 131.

by al-Qāṭf al-Fādil in *al-Mutajaddidāt*, all of which are in the section devoted to the description of Cairo under the Fatimids.

It would seem that al-Ahwādi’s draft may have consisted of nothing more than excerpts of texts pieced together without any great consideration and that all that al-Maqrizī did was to copy these texts, which liberto he had not known about, into his own book from their original sources. This may be why he did not feel obliged to mention al-Ahwādi, since he had neither revised his book nor made a fair copy of it. Nevertheless, professional ethics would normally have required al-Maqrizī to include the acknowledgement that he was fortunate to come across drafts in al-Ahwādi’s hand — which he mentions in his *Durār al-luqūd al-farîdā* — in his introduction to the *Khiṭāf*.

**Description of the draft**

The draft of al-Maqrizī’s *Khiṭāf* in the Khızāna Library consists of 180 sheets of quarto size, each of 20 lines. It measures 183 x 145 mm, and was most probably written by al-Maqrizī during the period 818–827/1415–1424.

The draft appears to have been written on previously used paper and there are many blanks, which suggests that al-Maqrizī was going to reconsider certain sections and fill them in from other sources. The kind of paper used here is the same as that on which al-Maqrizī wrote the draft of his book *al-Muqāfā al-kabīr*, now in Paris. This latter draft too, contains corrections and marginal additions by the author which suggest that he had not yet finished the book.

Many of the scraps (*tayyārāt*) placed between the sheets of the book are bound back to front. Furthermore, the last sheet in the manuscript (no. 180) is not in the right place but should really be at the beginning of the volume since it is concerned with defining the limits of the area lying between Fustāṭ and Cairo. A study of this manuscript reveals that al-Maqrizī must have restructured his book after completing it during the last decade of his life. He must also have divided some of the long quotations included in his draft and then moved some of them to more appropriate places in the book.

The date of this draft’s authorship can be construed from what al-Maqrizī mentions in the course of his description of downtown Cairo, or the Great Street, where he demarcates the street by reference to *Khızānat Shamā‘īl*, which at that time was the prison of Cairo’s governor. This *khızāna* was demolished in the year 818/1415, and so at a later stage al-Maqrizī added a marginal note to the effect that the Sūq al-Khila‘yyin and *Khızānat Shamā‘īl* had been turned into a mosque built by al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad Abū al-Naṣṣ Shaykh al-Mahmūdī.

This draft is indeed unique in what it reveals to us of early scholars’ methods of book composition, and for this reason I have prepared an edition of it for publication as a separate volume. I have refrained from comparing it with other complete versions of the text because of the differences of arrangement between them, especially in view of the fact that the present text contains details which do not exist in the final versions, which are also full of errors and distortions. Having said this, however, one should note that al-Maqrizī’s draft has been of great help in ascertaining the correct reading of many technical terms, proper names and place names which have become distorted in other versions of his *Khiṭāf*. 
PROBLEMS OF ATTRIBUTION
IN HISTORICAL AND
GEOGRAPHICAL WORKS

MOHAMED BENCHERIFA

It is well known that Islamic manuscripts have suffered much
damage during their long history in both the eastern and western
parts of the Islamic world. The damage suffered by the
manuscripts of Muslim Spain provides perhaps the clearest
example of this, for although Andalusian scholars produced a
vast number of written works, the majority of them are no longer
extant.

The problem of anonymous authorship is most acute in the
fields of history and geography, and it is from these two
disciplines that I shall illustrate the loss of the Andalusian
heritage. Almost a century ago, the Spanish arabist Pons
Boigues tried to enumerate the historians and geographers of
Muslim Spain and counted more than three hundred writers in the
two disciplines, while their works were nearly double that
number.1 Unfortunately, only a small part of this vast corpus
survives. The 60 volumes of Ibn Ḥayyān’s Kitāb al-Matīn, for
example, have been lost, as too have his al-Mu‘āthir al-‘Āmiriya
(or Akhbār al-dawla al-‘Āmiriya) and his al-Batsha al-kubrā.2
Lost too is Ibn Shuhayd’s al-Tarīkh al-kabīr, which consisted of
more than a hundred volumes,3 as are historical works by ʿAlī al-
Rāzī, al-Ḥukayyim, Ibn al-Naẓām, Ibn Sa’dān, Khālid b. Sa’īd,
ʿArīb, Iṣḥāq b. ʿAlīma al-Qaynī, al-Aqushṭīn, Ibn ʿAbī al-Raʿūf,
al-Shāhānṣī, al-Qubbāshī, ʿUbdā b. Maʿal al-Sanʿāʾ, Ibn Muzayn,

1 See F. Pons Boigues, Los Historiadores y Geógrafos Arabigo-
Españoles (Madrid, 1898; reprint Amsterdam, 1972).
2 For the works of Ibn Ḥayyān, see Ibn Ḥayyān, al-Muqtabas, ed.
3 See Ibn Bashkuwāl, Kitāb al-Silā; ed. F. Codera, Bibliotheca
Arabico-Hispana I-II (Madrid, 1882-8), 349, no. 756 (= ed. al-ʿAttār [1955],
338).
Ibn Abi al-Fayyad, and others. Some of these are all but forgotten, such as al-Hukayym’s Tarih, which is not mentioned in any of the historical bibliographies and which we know about solely through Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik’s transcriptions from it. The problem is complicated by the fact that part of the extant historical literature consists of works which were originally in several volumes but of which now we sometimes have only one. An example is al-‘Udharî’s geographical work Tarsî al-akhbâr (or Nizâm al-marjân) of which only the seventh volume survives. Another example is the historical work of Ibn al-Qatān, known as Nazm al-jumān, of which only the thirteenth volume is known to exist. Other such works include the Kitâb al-Muqtâbas of Ibn Hayyân, of which only four out of ten volumes are known to have survived, and the Kitâb al-Dhayl wa-l-takmilâ of Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, of which we have perhaps five of the original nine volumes. There are also a number of historical and geographical works which have reached us without the names of their authors, and it is these which form the subject-matter of this paper. We shall briefly present these works in chronological order, and then attempt to explain the causes of this phenomenon.

The “Akhbâr majmû’a”

Firstly, there is a work which is part of a unique manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (MS no. 2/1867). Its title, after the basmala and prayers for the Prophet (taskiya), is given as follows: Akhbâr majmû’a fi iltiâth al-Anaduls wa-dâirr man waliyâhî min al-umrârî ‘lîh dakhîl ‘Abd al-Rahmân b. Mo’âwiya wa tashhâlubbi ‘alayhî wa-mulkihi fiîhâ huwa wa-waladuhu wa-l-hurâb al-lâ’âma fi dakhîka baynahum. This was published with a Spanish translation by Lafuente y Alcántara in 1867, and is an indispensable source for the history of Spain from the conquest to the period of ‘Abd al-Rahmân al-Nâsir’s reign. Scholars have differed over the date of composition of this work. Both Lafuente y Alcántara and Dozy believe that it was written during the 5th century AH, whilst Ribera holds that it was completed towards the end of the reign of ‘Abd al-Rahmân al-Nâsir. However, there is nothing in the work itself, nor in any other well-known source, to indicate who its author might have been.

The “Crónica Anónima”

Secondly, we have a work edited and translated conjointly by Lévi-Provençal and García Gómez and published in 1950 under the title Una Crónica Anónima de ‘Abd al-Rahmân III al-Nâsir. It is in fact a small section of an historical work written, according to the editors, in the 4th or at the latest the 5th century AH. This fragment, consisting of 22 pages, was bought in the city of Fez. The editors, basing their judgment on the Andalusian script of the copy and the type of paper used, are of the opinion that it was transcribed during the 8th century AH either in Merinid Fez or in Nasrid Granada. As for the author of the work of which this fragment is a part, the editors suggest a number of
hypotheses, including 'Arīb, al-Rāzī, Ibn Hayyān, al-Shabānī and al-Qubbashi. However, these remain hypotheses, since there is nothing in the text to enable one to arrive at a firm conclusion on the matter.12

If we compare the years and events mentioned in this section with the corresponding entries in the fifth volume of the Kitāb al-Muqtābas, it is evident that the author of the fragment in question relied on Ibn Hayyān's accounts, summarising them and often retaining his wording. Amongst examples of this is the following passage from the anonymous chronicle on al-Nāṣir:

In the year 309, al-Nāṣir li-Dīn-i-lāh drove, from among the rebels in the central zone, the Banû Sa'īd and the Banū Nasīh, collectively known as the Banū Mastana, from their strongholds Ribarash and al-‘Āliya in the district of Priego (Bāghu). He also drove the Banū Muhallab from their strongholds of Cardela (Qardarya) and Esparraguera (Ishbarraghira).13

The corresponding text in al-Muqtābas is as follows:

In the same year al-Nāṣir li-Dīn-i-lāh drove, from among the rebels in the central zone, the Banû Sa'īd and the Banū Nasīh, collectively known as the Banū Mastana, driving them from their strongholds in the district of Priego (Bāghu), namely Ribarash, al-‘Āliya, and her daughters [?]. In the same year he also drove the Banū Muhallab from their strongholds, namely Cardela (Qardarya), Esparraguera (Ishbarraghira), and others.14

Abridgements of al-Bakrī's "Masālik"

We should note here that abridgement, supplementation and completion are among the predominant characteristics of the historical and geographical writings which become common from the 5th/11th century onwards in Andalusia and Morocco. This can be seen, for example, in the adaptations that were made of al-Rushāṭī's Iqtibās al-anwār and al-Bakrī's al-Masālik wa-l-mamālīk. The former was abridged by more than one person during and after the 7th/13th century,15 whilst three Andalusian scholars made adaptations of the second work. The first of these three we know only by his nisba, al-Ishbīlī (the Sevillian). The second is the writer and physician Abūd al-Ḥakam 'Ubaydallāh b. Ghalainūdī. Ibn al-Shabābī came across a copy of al-Bakrī's Masālik which had been completed by him and he quoted some paragraphs from it describing Sicily which do not occur in standard copies of the work.16 It appears that the author of al-Rawd al-mi’tār also had access to this version, since his quotations from the Masālik are also much more extensive and complete than their equivalents in existing copies of the work.17

The third Andalusian to abridge the Masālik of al-Bakrī was the author of al-Istibšār, whom we believe to be Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi al-Hafīd, the scribe of the Almohads. We base this claim on various pieces of evidence, the most outstanding of which are the Tamgrūtī's quotations from al-Hafīd and his naming him in his travelogue al-Nafīha al-miskiyya. We have enlarged on the evidence for this in a monograph devoted to al-Hafīd.18

Miscellaneous works

Other geographical writings from Andalusia and the Maghreb contain similar ambiguities and obscurities. Thus orientalists differ about the name of al-Zuhri, author of a geographical work, with some, like Dozy, calling him "the unknown Almerrinian."19 Few of the distinguishing characteristics of this author came to light until after his book was edited by al-Ḥajj Sādūq.

Scholars also differ as to whether Ibn 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Himyari, the author of al-Rawd al-mi’tār, was from Ceuta, Andalusia or Tunis, and as to the date of his death.20

18 M. Bencherifa, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi al-Hafīd: fusūl min sīra mansūya (Beirut, 1992), 159-94.
19 See I. Y. Krachkovskii, Ṭārīkh al-adab al-jughfrī (Beirut, 1972), 303.
“Dhikr bilād al-Andalus”

Another example of this type of anonymous work is the Dhikr bilād al-Andalus - whose full title is given as Dhikr bilād al-Andalus wa-man malakaḥa min mulūk al-Murābiṭīn wa-I-Muwahhidīn wa-Banī Ḥūd wa-Banī Marīn wa-Banī Naṣr wa-Banī Ashqālāla - which is like a scrapbook of remarks by historians and geographers about Andalusia. The only two known manuscripts of this compilation came to light at the time of Morocco’s independence. One was in the possession of al-Glaoui Pasha and is now kept in the National Library (no. 85 Ṭīrī). The other was discovered in a royal palace and is now kept in the Hasaniyya Library (no. 558). A young Spanish orientalist, Luis Molina, has now edited this work and translated it into Spanish, relying on these two copies.

The compiler of this work refers to himself by the phrase qāl sāḥib al-ta’rīkh (“The author of the history says”). Al-Maqqari, in his Naḥḥ al-Ṭīb, quotes several times from this history but seems not to have known the identity of its author whose name does not appear in the copy which he used. Consequently he prefaces his quotations with various phrases such as “a Maghribi historian has said …”, “what I have read by a Maghribi historian …”, and “a later writer has said …”). We do not know, however, how he knew that the author was from the Maghreb or that he was one of the “later” historians.

The editor of the Arabic version is cautious about the date of the work. He supports this claim by a remark by the author on the subject of Granada — “And today it is the seat of the Muslim kingdom in Andalusia and the centre of authority” — and the fact that the author’s prayer for Almeria (“And Almeria, may God protect it!”) indicates that the city was still in the hands of the Muslims at that time, since his prayer for many other Andalusian towns was “May Allah in His gracious favour return it to Islam!” As for the editor’s hypothesis that the author was from Fez and may also have been the author of the Rawd al-

qīrās, no support for these is to be found in the text itself nor anywhere else. Indeed, there is considerable dispute about the author of the Rawd al-qīrās, since there are handwritten copies that attribute the work to Shih b. Abī al-Halīm al-Haylānī, a historian from Marrakesh, as well as quotations in other works that attribute it to this man rather than to Ibn Zar al-Fāsī.

“Maḥkhir al-барbar”

Amongst anonymous historical works written during the Merinid period is a book called Maḥkhir al- Barbar which, apart from the very beginning, is complete. It consists of three sections: the first, from which the beginning is missing, consists of chapters containing quotations on history, geography and genealogy, all of which relate to the Maghreb. Without doubt, this section is by Abū ‘Alī Shih b. Abī al-Halīm. This is confirmed by expressions which recur throughout the book and at the end of its chapters, such as the following:

Ubayd Allāh Shih b. Abū al-Halīm said: “This is the extent of our knowledge of the genealogies of the inhabitants of the central Maghreb. We shall [also] mention, God willing, the genealogies of the people in the lands of the farthest Maghreb as far as we are able.”

This claim regarding the identity of the author cited in the first section is also proved by the fact that quotations from this section are also found in the Bayān of Ibn Idhāri, where once again they are attributed to Abū ‘Alī Shih b. Abī al-Halīm. Thus in the first part of the Bayān we read:

Abū ‘Alī Shih b. Abī Shih informed me that as far as he knew, it was not true that ‘Uqba, may God be pleased with him, was present at the building of any of the mosques in the Maghreb, apart from the mosque of al-Qaryawān and a mosque in Dar’a in the farthest Sūs. The other mosques named after him were, it seems, built by others at places where he stayed, and God knows best.

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21 Luis Molina, Una Descripción Anónima de Al-Andalus (Madrid, 1983), vols. I (Dhikr bilād al-Andalus, Introduction and Arabic text) and II (Spanish translation and study).
22 See Molina, Descripción Anónima, I, 35, 91, 107, 175, 182, etc.
23 The author also uses the phrase “qāl sāḥib al-ta’līf.”
24 See al-Maqqari, Naḥḥ al-Ṭīb, I, 197; Molina, Descripción Anónima, II, 303.
25 ibid., II, 304.
26 Maḥkhir al- Barbar, MS Rabat, al-Khizānā al-‘Āmma, 1020 dūl, f. 8.
27 ibn al-‘Idhārī, al-Bayān al-mughrib, I, 27.
The original version of this item is presented in the first section of the Mafakhir al-Barbar as follows:

The authors of the Masalik al-Bakrî and al-Ishbiliî, say: “He built his mosque, which is known by his name to this day, at Nafis, and God knows the truth of this best. However, the mosques at the building of which he was known to have been present are the mosque of al-Qayrawan, one in Dar’a and one in the Sâs Valley. As for the others, God knows best the truth of the matter.”28

Similar proof is furnished by the presence of certain passages from this book in Dalal’i l-al-qibla, written by the same author. The following passage, for instance, occurs in the latter treatise:

Shaykh Abû ‘Abdallâh Muhammad b. ‘Umar b. Makhlât told us that the scupulous faqîh Abû ‘Ali al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Hassûn al-Mâkiri, known as al-Kaffî, told him that the minbar of Aghmât Haylânà was constructed in the year 80 AH, and I think that was written on it.29

This passage also occurs in the first section of the Mafâkhîr as follows:

‘Ubayd Allâh said that Abû Muhammad b. ‘Umar b. Mukhallad told him at Taourirt that Abû ‘Ali al-Kaffî had told him at Asafî that the minbar at Aghmût Haylânà was commissioned in the year 85 AH.30

It is the habit of Ibn ‘Abd al-Halîm to introduce his items with the phrase “qâl ‘Ubaydallâhî”, which Levi-Provençal and others have taken to mean that ‘Ubaydallâhî was a son of this historian.31 However, it seems more likely that the name simply describes the historian himself, who was well-known for his piety and modesty, as is shown by the first of the two texts cited.

The second section of this work begins with the basmala, tasliya (blessings on the Prophet) and bândala. These are followed by an introduction which mentions the name of the work, Mafâkhîr al-Barbar, its contents and the reason it was written. Towards the end of this introduction, after referring to the correspondence that took place between al-Ghazâlî and Yusuf b. Tâshfin, comes the following sentence: “And we shall quote the letter of Shaykh Abû Hâmîd [i.e. al-Ghazâlî] to him in its proper place in this work, together with [other] letters that contain material relevant to this discipline.”32 This is indeed what we find in the third section of the work, which also starts with the basmala and tasliya, before listing a few entries from the travelogue of Abû Bakr b. al-‘Arabî and the above-mentioned letter of al-Ghazâlî, along with other material. One would normally assume that these two sections were also part of Ibn ‘Abd al-Halîm’s work because of their resemblance to the first section, were it not for a paragraph in the second section which contradicts such a conclusion, for at the end of a list of outstanding Berber jurists we read:

And among them is the upright faqîh and knowledgeable historian Abû ‘Ali Sâîî, son of the upright, saintly and pious scholar, Abû Sâîî Abû al-Halîm, who settled in Nafis and who is still alive now, in the year 712 AH. God has combined knowledge and worship in him, and endowed him with discerning judgment and piety. He is renowned for his virtue and his withholding himself from the world, taking from it only that which fulfills his needs, being aloof from its people and manifesting piety in the highest degree. He is also distinguished by his generosity, kindness, purity and God-fearing nature, [all of which] are the qualities of [our] upright forebears (al-salaf al-salîî). [As the poet said]:

Were it not that we would be thought excessive,
We would have outstripped in speech those who strive to outstrip.

I asked him about his tribe and he said that he was of Aylâni lineage.33

It seems likely that this paragraph was inserted by the son of ‘Abd al-Halîm or by one of his students who thought it appropriate to add it and thus complete the list of jurists mentioned, since, as the line of poetry indicates, he was considered to be of as great a stature as the others.

28 Mafâkhîr al-Barbar, f. 14v.
29 Ibn ‘Abd al-Halîm, Dalâ’il al-qibla, MS Rabat, al-Khizâna an-’Annâ, f. 15v.
31 Ibid., 202.
32 Mafâkhîr al-Barbar, f. 21v.
33 Ibid. f. 37v; Kirab Mafâkhîr al-Barbar, ed. E. Lévi-Provençal (Rabat, 1353/1934), 75.
We thus feel that careful comparison between the different sections of this work on the one hand, and between them and the Dalā’il al-qibla on the other (this latter being firmly established as the work of Ibn ʿAbd al-Halīm), will bear out what we have said above.

Finally, we draw the reader’s attention to the fact that Lévi-Provençal published the second part of this work in 1934, saying that it was by “an unknown historian who wrote it in the year 712 AH” — this being, as we have seen, the year mentioned in the paragraph quoted above — and he also published part of the first section in the journal of the Egyptian Institute in Madrid. Lévi-Provençal in fact considers it well possible that the whole book is the work of Ibn ʿIdhārī.\(^{34}\) This, however, is contradicted by numerous pieces of evidence, some of which we have mentioned above, which make us prefer to attribute the work to Ibn ʿAbd al-Halīm.

“al-Hulal al-mawshiyya”

We now turn to another historical work which was composed during the middle years of the Granadan period, namely al-Hulal al-mawshiyya fi dhikr al-akhbār al-Marāqushiiyya. No extant manuscripts of this work contain the name of the author. When the book was printed for the first time in Tunis in 1911, it was attributed to Ibn al-Khaṭīb.\(^{35}\) However, the publisher cannot have noticed the date of composition, 783 AH, given towards the end of the work;\(^{36}\) Ibn al-Khaṭīb died in 776 AH, and this book was therefore written seven years after his death. Two further editions of the book appeared in Morocco: one in Rabat in 1936,\(^{37}\) and the second in Casablanca in 1979.\(^{38}\) The editors of this latter edition state on the title page that it is by “an Andalusian writer who lived in the 8th century AH.”\(^{39}\) I do not know why the editors do not accept the word of the author of al-Budūr al-dāwīyya and subsequent authors, namely that the Hulal is one of the works of Ibn Simak al-ʿĀmilī,\(^{40}\) for it seems unlikely that the author of the Budūr would say such a thing rashly. Rather, it is quite possible that he came across a copy attributed to this author. Nor did the editors consult the studies by Brunschwig, Bosch Viñó and Rubiera, or Mahmūd Makki’s recent treatment of the subject in his introduction to Ibn Simak’s al-Zahrāʾ al-manthūra.\(^{41}\) All of these scholars, basing their arguments on the evidence of the author of al-Budūr al-dāwīyya and on a resemblance between the Hulal and the Zahrāʾ, incline to the view that the author of the Hulal was Ibn Simak.

I recently came across a new book by Ibn Simak (whose full name is Abū al-Qāsim Muhammad b. Abī al-ʿĀlā b. Simak) entitled Rawnaq al-tabbir fi ʿukm al-siyāsah wa-ʿl-tabbir, dedicated to al-Mustaʿin bi-l-lāh Muhammad b. Yusuf b. Muhammad al-Ghāni bi-l-lāh. In the introduction, the author tells us that it was the fruit of 33 years of service to the Nasrid state, and mentions that he had previously dedicated essays and literary works on various disciplines to the father and grandfather of this sultan.\(^{42}\) In this work we find strong evidence that al-Hulal al-mawshiyya is by this same Ibn Simak, namely that the same phrases occur in both works. For example, in the introductory paragraph of the Hulal, after the bandala and the invocation of blessings on the Prophet and the Companions, we find a prayer for “… āḥād al-maqām al-ʿalī al-Muḥammadī al-Naṣrī al-Sulṭānī al-Muḥājīdī.”\(^{43}\) The same phrase occurs in the Rawnaq al-tabbir as follows: “… āḥād al-maqām al-ʿalī al-Muḥammadī al-Naṣrī al-Sulṭānī al-Maṣṭaʾaʾīn.”\(^{44}\) The phrase is thus the same except that in the first book the prayer is for Muḥammad al-Ghāni bi-l-lāh, whilst in the second it is for Muḥammad al-Mustaʿin bi-l-lāh. Another such example occurs at the end of both works in the following supplication:

“O God, guard with Your unsleeping eye his kingdom, noble as far as it extends, and reward his efforts in protecting and defending the

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\(^{34}\) Lévi-Provençal, “Faṣḥ ʿal-ʿarab li-l-Maghrib”, 201.

\(^{35}\) al-Hulal al-mawshiyya fi dhikr al-akhbār al-Marāqushiiyya, taʿlīf ... Ibn al-Khaṭīb, ed. al-Bashīr al-Fūrāṭi (Tunis, 1329 [1911]).


\(^{38}\) See n. 36 above.

\(^{39}\) al-Hulal al-mawshiyya, ed. Zakār and Zamānī, 1.

\(^{40}\) al-Budūr al-dāwīyya (MS), f. 3. Al-ʿĀmilī has been corrupted into al-ʿAmīrī, and is quoted thus in al-Maṣādir al-ʿarabiyya li-ṭārikh al-Maghrib, 105.


\(^{43}\) al-Hulal al-mawshiyya, ed. Zakār and Zamānī, 12.

\(^{44}\) Rawnaq al-tabbir, dhībla.
territories of Islam. O God, let all the provinces be encompassed by the goodness of his practice and allow him to attain his greatest wishes and highest hopes. O God, allow him to revivify on this peninsula the ways of Ţaţīq b. Ẓiyād, and perpetuate his days among us, which are like times of celebration and feast days; for You are all-powerful and enduring. This is all; and peace.”

In our opinion, the presence of this text at the end of both books removes any uncertainty regarding the attribution of the work. There is another form of words that is found in both works. In the Ḥulal we find the following expression: “The author of this has said: ‘If this format were to be followed we would be straying from our intended goal of brevity’.” While in Rawnaq al-tabhīr we find the following: “The writer has said: ‘If this format were to be followed [our] speech would become very long.’”

Another familiar formula is Ibn Simāk’s phrase, taken here from the end of the dibāja of al-Zahrār al-maḥbūra, “wa ḥādīḥa ḥīn al-ibtidā’ bi-l-Zahrār” (“And this, at the outset of the Zahrār”). At the end of the dibāja of the Ḥulal we find: “wa ḥādīḥa ḥīn al-ibtidā’ bimā ashartu ilayhi min al-anbāʾ” (“And this, at the outset of the information to which I allude.”)

Ibn al-Ṣāyrafi’s Qaṣīda ‘ayniyya, in which he offers counsel to Amir Tashfin, is also common to each work. Of particular interest to us are the words used by way of introduction to this qaṣīda, for in each work they contain similar if not identical phrases. This is the text as it appears in the Ḥulal:

He defeated the Christians after a battle had ensued between the two groups, during which the majority of those with him deserted him. Whilst battle still raged the jurist Abū Zakariyyā congratulated him on his safety, and warned him of the deceptive nature of war and informed him of its rules and what could correctly be done during it.

In the introduction to the qaṣīda in Rawnaq al-tabhīr, we read that the poet addressed the prince with the ode

... immediately after he had defeated the Christians after a split and confrontation between the two parties took place, during which all those with him deserted him. Then he congratulated him on his safety, and warned him of the deceptive nature of war and informed him of its rules and what could correctly be done during it.

This unity of style is a clear indication that both works were written by the same author.

Another similarity between the two works is the story connected with ‘Abd al-Mu‘min’s military organisation in facing Tāshfin in the region of Tlemcen; the wording of the description is identical in both works, again showing that they are by the same author.

“Akhbār al-‘aṣr”

If we have been able to assess the identity of the author of Ḥulal by analytical textual comparison, we are unable to do so with regard to one of the last chronicles of the history of Andalusia, Akhbār al-‘aṣr fi inqīdā’ dawlat Bani Naṣir. The name of the author is not mentioned in any of the manuscript copies of the work which have been found so far. However, from time to time he uses the expression qāl al-mu‘arrīkh (or al-mu‘allif) ‘āfī Allah ‘anhu (“The historian (or the author), God forgive him, said”). This is similar to what is found in Dīhkr bilād al-Andalus in which the following expressions are reiterated: qāl sāhib al-ta‘līf al-ta‘rikh (the author of the work/the history said) or qāl al-mu‘allif ‘āfī Allah ‘anhu (“The author, God forgive him, said”). Such expressions also occur frequently throughout the Rawd al-Qītās. Whatever the case may be, all that we know of the author of Akhbār al-‘aṣr is that his knowledge was limited, for he says in the introduction to his book that

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45 al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya, ed. Zakkār and Zamāna, 190; Rawnaq al-tabhīr, f. 49v.
46 al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya, ed. Zakkār and Zamāna, 32.
47 Rawnaq al-tabhīr, f. 15b.
48 Ibn Simāk, al-Zahrār al-maḥbūra, 54.
50 ibid., 124.
51 Rawnaq al-tabhīr, f. 28v.
52 al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya, ed. Zakkār and Zamāna, 132; Rawnaq al-tabhīr, f. 28v.
53 Akhbār al-‘aṣr, ed. M. J. Müller (Munich, 1863), 2, 6, 17.
54 Molina, Descripción Anónima, I, 29, 47-8, 87, 91, 107, 175.
55 Due to the many printed editions of the Rawd al-Qītās (or al-Anīs al-muṭrīb), it has seemed pointless to list all the pages in which these expressions occur.
I have inclined to brevity, leaving aside lengthiness and prolixity, since my literary talent is weak and my offerings of eloquence are insignificant.  

We also know from the author that he was an eye-witness of the events which he records, and that he participated in some of the raids that he describes. In his remarks on the raid of the Mukīn he states:

The author, God forgive him, said: "A courageous and daring horseman related [this] to me on that day when we were on our way back to Granada."  

It seems likely that this writer was one of many who moved to the Moroccan shore immediately after the fall of Granada, and that in Morocco he recorded information about the difficulties encountered by the Muslims in the last days of the kingdom of Granada as a warning for others. The presence of several manuscript copies of Ākhbār al-ʿasr only in Morocco is possible support for our theory. The heading of one copy is as follows: "Ākhbār al-ʿasr fī maqādīā dawlat Bani Nasr, taʿlīf al-ʿAshīkh al-imām al-ʿālim al-hamnāmī, farāḍ miṣrīū wa wāḥid ʿasrīhī Sayyīdī Muḥammad al-Ghamrī al-Fālīkī." Another copyist wrote the following note at the end of the book:

It is by al-Ghamrī the Shāfīʿī according to what is written on the first page of this blessed collection. This, however, is incorrect because the work which is by him is the one following this, unless both are by him. I do not know.  

"The one following this" is al-Muqṭataṭ al-fīkriyya ʿalā al-daʿāʾir al-tārikhiyya, a short work by al-Ghamrī. We expected, despite the reference to his being a Shāfīʿī, that there might be something to be read between the lines here. However, after some research, it became clear that the matter was simply a mistake committed by the copyist, for the writer was from the

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60 It was published for the first time by Müller (see no. 49 above), and subsequently by Shakib Arslan. The Arabic text, with a Spanish translation, was published in Larache in 1940. A new edition was published by Muharram Radwan al-Daia in 1984. As far as I know, the most recent publication appeared in 1991.
62 All of these scholars wrote histories of Fez and are quoted in various sources.
64 See al-Dhâyi wa-l-tukmīla, VIII, 324 (where the text reads "Bijaya" rather than "Bīja").
65 See the index of the published edition of Maṣākhīr al-Barbar (see no. 34 above).
which originally consisted of numerous volumes but of which only parts have come down to us.

Of the second type are various fascicles of historical works. A number of examples of such sections are to be found in the Qarawiyyin and other libraries.

An example of the third type is al-Khabar ‘an al-dawla al-Sa’diyya, since none of the manuscripts of this important historical work mention the name of the author. Indeed, it would appear that the author intentionally left out his name for fear of undesirable consequences because of the aspersions that the book casts on the Sa’di dynasty. This author, who lived until the beginning of the ‘Alawī dynasty, was not known to his contemporary, the historian al-Ifrānī, nor was he known to the historian al-Zayyānī, yet both of them knew the book and quoted from it.66 Perhaps this indicates that the work had a wide circulation; after all, more than five handwritten copies of it have come down to us.

Another example of this third type of manuscript is al-Dhakhtira al-saniyya li ta’rīkh al-dawla al-Marinīyya. The work remains anonymous as the author is not mentioned in the known sources, and the most that can be gleaned from the text is that it was written for the Merinid Sultan Abū Sa’īd I. Some scholars have noted similarities between this book and the Rawd al-Qīrāt, and others are of the opinion that they are indeed by the same author, namely Ibn Abī Zār. According to those who hold that he was the author of the Qīrāt.67

The Qīrāt provides us with an example of the fourth and final type of manuscript, namely works of disputed authorship. The reason for the disagreement in this case is that in some copies the work is attributed to Sālih b. “Abd al-Halīm and in others to Ibn Abī Zār, thus causing people, in both earlier times and more recently, to differ over the identity of the author. It has, however, become customary to attribute the book to Ibn Abī Zār, under whose name it has been published several times.68

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67 See the article by ‘Abdallāh Kamnin in Majallat Tetouan, II, 145.
68 See the introduction to the edition published by ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Mansūr.
dynasty, the authors of which deliberately omitted to mention their names for reasons of prudence, since a number of scholars were tried for their historical writings. There are also a number of critical Andalusian poetic works whose authors are unknown for the same reason.69

In addition to the causes already stated is the common problem of deterioration, particularly with regard to the title page or the colophon. When such problems occur in an original or unique copy it can be very difficult to discover the identity of the author.

I shall conclude this brief presentation by drawing attention to my own efforts in some instances of this type. The first relates to a manuscript in the Escorial, of which the first folio is missing. At the end of it we find the following:

[Thus] concludes the Kitāb al-Tanbih 'alā al-mughālāta wa-l-tamwiḥ wa-ṣaḥṣiḥ al-mursāl wa-l-taḥdiṣ al-ṭālī bi-l-burāhān al-kāfī wa-l-bayān al-shāfī.

In this work a certain Abū Hātim responds to commentaries on pre-Islamic poetry by a certain Abū Mutarrif; thus the attribution of this book to Abū Mutarrif Ahmad b. 'Amīra al-Makhtūmi is woefully inaccurate. I have dealt with the verification of the authorship of this work in my university dissertation on Abū al-Mutarrif Ahmad b. al-'Amīra.70

The second case with which I have been concerned is the status of the geographical work Kitāb al-Isbiḥār, whose author is, I believe, Ibn Abī Rabbīhi al-Haḍīd. I have set forth the details about this in my monograph on this writer.71

A third case concerns a Spanish commentary on the poetry of al-Mutanabbi. Only the second half is extant and no mention is made of the commentator's name. However, my research led me to the conclusion that the author is, once again, Ibn Abī

69 For example, we might mention Ibn al-Abbār and 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Malzūzī in this respect. On anonymous critical poems, see, for example, Ibn 'Idhārī, al-Bayān al-magāhib, II, 280 and IV, 251; also M. Benchirifa, Al-Basîṭ, 'ākhir shu'arâ'î al-Andalus (Beirut, 1985), 176. There are also a number of poems by way of elegance for al-Andalus in al-Maqqari's Naṣr al-tib which lack any attribution for the same reason.
70 M. Benchirifa, Abū al-Mutarrif Ahmad b. 'Amīra: ḥayātuhu wa šīhārahu (Rabat, 1966), 269-84.
71 M. Benchirifa, Ibn Abī Rabbīhi al-Haḍīd, 159-94.

Rabbīhi al-Haḍīd. The story of this discovery is related in detail in the above-mentioned monograph.72

A fourth such problem that I encountered was in a diwān from Granada. On the edge (ţurra) of the sole extant copy is a note which says that the work is by Ibn al-Khaṭīb. However, a detailed reading of the text made it clear that it was the second half of a diwān by Abū al-Husayn b. Farkīn, a previously unknown poet from Granada.73

One of the latest cases in which I have been able, with God's help, to ascertain the correct authorship of a work was in being able to attribute an anonymous manuscript of Mukhtar al-mustasfā, in the Escorial, to Ibn Rushd al-Haḍīd. My student and friend, the late Jamal al-Dīn al-Azlī, told me about the work and gave me a copy of it, asking for my opinion on its authorship; his own examination of the text had led him to believe it to be the work of Ibn Rushd, although he had discovered no textual evidence for this. He then passed away leaving the work at the press. Then, while reading the manuscript of Rawdat al-aʿlām by Ibn al-Azlī, I came across the following:

When the learned Ibn Rushd abridged al-Ghazālī's Mustasfā on the principles of jurisprudence, he left out the introduction on logic saying: "We shall leave everything until its proper place, for anyone who seeks to learn more than one thing at one time ends up not being able to learn even one of them."74

When I came across this remark, I went back to my copy of the Mustasfā and found exactly the same words, confirming Ibn Rushd as the author of the abridgment. The proof-readers were then informed and this information was included in a footnote.

Thus it is that those working with manuscripts often come across works whose authors are not known and not mentioned anywhere, or works attributed to the wrong authors, or to authors who are scarcely known. To overcome such problems, one needs much patience, painstaking research, a great deal of time and unceasing diligence. Such are the qualities which lead, with God's help, to success.

72 ibid., 110-39.
74 ibid, Mukhtar al-mustasfā (Dūr al-Maghrib al-Islāmī, 1993), 21.
THE HUMAN ELEMENT BETWEEN TEXT
AND READER

THE IJĀZA
IN ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS

JAN JUST WITKAM

The *ijāza* is the certificate of reading or hearing which is
sometimes written on manuscripts, usually near the colophon or
on the title page. It confers upon the recipient the right to transmit
a text, or to teach, or to issue legal opinions. It also bears witness
to attendance at a reading session. The *ijāzat al-tadrīs*, the licence
to teach, and the *ijāzat al-samā‘*, the certificate of attendance at a
reading session and hence the licence to transmit the text read,
should not be confused. Our attention here will be focused on the
*ijāzat al-samā‘*, the protocols of reading sessions which were
often added to a text, as these in particular provide us with ample
information on the human element in the transmission of texts.

The *ijāza* is a conspicuous feature of Arabic manuscripts and
it illustrates how a text functions in an educational, scientific or
cultural environment. Studying *ijāzas* increases our knowledge of
the human element in the use of texts and manuscripts. For a
better understanding of the *ijāza* it is also important also to be
aware of the individual and personal element in the transmission
of Muslim scholarship: we, therefore, deal with this subject
briefly in the following section. Finally, we suggest a proposal
for collecting and analysing *ijāzat al-samā‘* in Arabic
manuscripts.¹

¹ There is no monograph devoted to the *ijāza*, nor is there a published
corpus of texts. Some useful sources which provide a wealth of material on
the subject are: 'Abd Allāh Fāyūd, al-*ijāzat al-ilmīyya* 'inda al-muslimīn
(Baghdad, 1967) (with emphasis on the Shi‘a); P.A. MacKay, *Certificates of
Transmission on a Manuscript of the Maqāmat of Hariri*, MS. Cairo, Addab
105, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, LXI/4
Personal approach and continuity in Islamic scholarship

It has often been stated that in Islam there is no hierarchic structure comparable with the church-like organisation of the Christians. Strictly speaking, this is true. Islam does not have an infallible pope nor does it have a clergy with an intricately differentiated hierarchic structure who claim to occupy a position between God and the believer and dispense sacraments and pretend to possess the monopoly of doctrine. This does not, of course, mean that clerical organisation is totally lacking in Islam. It is only that the dynamics of continuity — since organisation produces continuity — in Islam have developed in a different way. In Islam no intermediary between God and man is necessary. And just as a Muslim’s relationship with God is direct and personal, so too is a man’s way of procuring religious knowledge. In Islam it is the personal relationship between teacher and pupil that, through the generations of scholars, has produced a powerful driving force that ensures a continuity of its own.

Several genres of Islamic literature have developed in the course of time, which reflect this individual and personal attitude. It started very early indeed, with the emergence of Islamic tradition, hadīth. As important as the content of the Tradition is the chain of authorities, the isnād, which precedes each tradition. The early collections are even organised not according to subject matter but to their authorities, and hence referred to by the name Musnad. Half of Islamic Tradition is ʾilm al-rijāl, the “knowledge of the transmitters”. Only an authentic chain of trustworthy transmitters validates the text of a hadīth. Without it a hadīth is suspended in space and is incomplete — at least that is the personal opinion of the early Muslim scholars. For practical reasons these Tradition texts and chains of authorities were written down, but, according to the old ideals, religious knowledge was best disseminated orally. The isnāds can thus be read as protocols of successive instances and sessions in which learning was transmitted. The written form of hadīth is thus but one dimension of the Tradition: the human factor in the transmission and continuity of knowledge is as important as the recorded message itself. The saying that “knowledge is in the breasts of men, not in the lines of [of books]” (al-ʾilm fī al-sudūr āf fī al-suṭūr) aptly summarises this idea.2

The rapid expansion of Islam and the enormous diversification of the different disciplines of learning made it impossible to maintain oral transmission as the only vehicle for passing on knowledge. The Word of God, the divine revelation, had to be written down, since the early carriers of the Holy Word died on the battlefields of the expansion wars. At a later stage, historical and Tradition texts were written down as well, initially in all sorts of personal notebooks of transmitters, later in more organised collections that were intended for a wider audience. Though, in the end, books became accepted as the ordinary medium, the individual and personal approach nevertheless remained intact. Just reading a book in order to grasp its contents, as we do nowadays, was not enough. In the classical period, it was thought, a book should be read with a teacher, preferably the author himself, or else it should be studied with an authoritative and respected professor. Reading, or rather studying, was not a solitary affair. It was also a social event, as we shall see.

Biographical literature emerged in Islam as one of the consequences of this individual and personal approach. The genre was not new around the Mediterranean. In classical antiquity biographical literature such as the “Parallel Lives” of Plutarch served historical, didactic, moralistic and sometimes ideological purposes. Some of the Islamic biographical literature had a similar purpose but there was an extra dimension. The “science of men”, or ʾilm al-rijāl, developed into a critical method


3 For their use, and the distrust they evoked, see al-Balkhī (d. ca. 319/913), Kitāb Qabāl al-akhrāb wa-maʿrūf al-rījāl, MS Cairo, Dīr al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, Muṣṭalāh 14M, passim. An edition of this text by myself is in an advanced stage of preparation.
for the assessment of scholarly authority. Many biographical works were concerned with describing networks of scholarship and chains of transmission. A clear example of this is the *Tahdhib al-tahdhib* by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 852/1449), which is a biographical dictionary of trustworthy transmitters of Islamic Tradition. The usual structure of a biography in this work breaks down into three parts: firstly the full name and some other pertinent life data of the subject are given, then follow enumerations of earlier authorities from whom he transmits Tradition, and then of those later authorities who in turn transmit from him. The biographee is thereby presented in the centre of an activity of transmission of knowledge. This particular work by Ibn Hajar is exclusively concerned with traditionists and this particular approach can, therefore, be observed here very clearly. Other biographical works, even those that are not so exclusively concerned with traditionists, often contain similar bits of network information.

**Literary genres of an individual and personal nature**

Other individual and personal genres evolved. The *fahrasa*, which developed in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, is one of these. This genre, in which a scholar enumerates his shaykhs and the works he read with them, can be read as a scholarly curriculum vitae. The *thabat*, which is not confined to the Maghreb, is a list compiled by a relater of traditions in which he mentions his shaykhs and the scope of his transmissions on their authority. Likewise, in the *ribla*, or travel account, attention shifted from geography and ethnography in the classical period to the personal relationships of scholars. Especially in later times it became much more than just a travel account. In it, the itinerant author has ample opportunity to enumerate the scholars he has met, the lessons he has taken and the authorisations he has received during his travels. And the purpose of his travels was, of course, not touristic but of a much more edifying nature, namely the pilgrimage to Makka. Yet another type of personal text is

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4 Published in 12 volumes in Hyderabad, 1325-7 (1907-9).
6 This genre of travel accounts became specially developed in the Western part of the Islamic world. The great distance from the Arabian Peninsula must have contributed to this development.

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7 Many *silsilas* are known. The Sufis have their own sets of *silsilas*. I have published and analysed the *silsilas* of the Bosnian Hanafi scholar Hasan Kafi al-Aqhišari (d. 1025/1616) in *Manuscripts of the Middle East (MMME)*, IV (1989), 85-114.
finest artistic expression. Because of them, the *ijāza* has become an independent literary genre.⁹

Yet another special literary genre that developed from this practice is the *juz*; a short text usually consisting of not much more than one quire, and often small enough for it to be easily carried. It could happen that only a very small part of a scholar’s work was read and taught in a session in which an *ijāza* was going to be granted. In that case the issuer of the *ijāza* had the choice between two options. He could confer upon his pupil, or a visiting scholar, the right to transmit the whole of a book by him, or his transmissions (marwiyyāt), or his own orally received knowledge (masmū‘āt), or the works for which he himself had already acquired certificates (mustajāzāt), or of any other of his works even if they had only been partially read or not read at all. Such *ijāzāt* must be avoided.

The other option was that the short text or the specific collection of transmissions which had been read could be written out separately. Such shorter collections of parts of the repertoire of a shaykh often bear the title *juz*.¹⁰ Sometimes these *ajāzā* are provided with a more detailed specification and a more meaningful title.¹¹

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⁹ Such booklets are available in numerous libraries. The MS Montreal, McGill University Library, No. AC 156 is such a separate diploma. Its content was analysed and published by Adam Gacek, “The Diploma of the Egyptian Calligrapher Hasan al-Rushdi”, MME, IV (1989), 44–55. Another one is MS Leiden, University Library, Or. 11.121. This thin volume, which probably originates from Istanbul, contains an *ijāza* in the readings of the Qur’an conferred upon Abū Bakr Luṭfī Afandī b. al-Sayyid ‘Umar al-Sanā‘ī by his teacher Ismā‘īl Haqqī b. ‘Alī in Muḥarram 1260/1844.

¹⁰ It is not impossible that the *juz* as an independent genre developed from the old practice of writing *ijāzāt* with written quire and the like on each *juz*, here more or less meaning quire, or gathering, of a manuscript. Such manuscripts are referred to as *muṣafāat* divided into *ajāzā*'. This feature is by no means rare. It can be attested by the Leiden manuscripts Or. 122 (Makārim al-Akhlaq) and Or. 12.644 (Tārīkh Ma‘budat Dimashq). These manuscripts contain on each gathering of a number of almost identical certificates. The gatherings have title pages of their own and break up the text into parts of more or less equal length which have no connection with any division into chapters and sections that the text may also have. This latter characteristic is shared, of course, with the Qur’an, which has a formal division into *ajāzā* and, at the same time, a division into chapters, or *sūras*.

¹¹ *Ajāzā* with *sama‘āt* are mentioned by Sa‘īd al-Dīn al-Munajjīd, “IJāzāt al-sama‘āt”, nos. 10 and 11.

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When a scholar’s trust in his colleague or student was great, it could happen that he conferred upon him the right to transmit all his works, even if they had not been the subject of a teaching session. In such a case the *ijāza* may contain the titles of most or all of the teacher’s works and be, in effect, an autobiography. Such lists of titles of books in the *ijāza*, or elsewhere in a manuscript for that matter, are hardly ever explored as yet.¹² There are many more works, often with more flowery titles, which serve the same purpose, namely to record and assess a scholar’s authority. When one starts searching for this type of book the supply is seemingly endless. The common features that may be observed in all of them are the enumerations of scholars visited, of books read, and of authorisations (*ijāzāt*) received. In this context the *ijāza* is the conclusion of a meeting between two scholars which simultaneously contains an account of their scholarly antecedents. By virtue of it, the recipient is invested with the authority to transmit or teach part or whole of the work of the scholar who has issued the *ijāza*. The whole process is not unlike the diploma which students of present day universities consider as the culmination of their study, the difference being that these *ijāzāt* reflect the relationship between two natural persons, rather than between a student and his institution of education.

Finally, we may note that the alphabetical arrangement of biographical material, such as in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Taḥdīth al-taḥdīth*, encompassed all previous developments. This type of arrangement was, of course, the only organisational answer to an ever increasing corpus of material, although we do also find limitations of a chronological or geographical nature within alphabetically arranged biographical dictionaries.

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Codicology and the ḥāṣa in Arabic manuscripts

What, one might ask, has all this to do with manuscripts and, more particularly, with codicology? The latter science is sometimes described as the specialism that devotes attention to all aspects of a manuscript other than the contents of the text it contains. In more positive wording, it is sometimes designated as the science that focusses exclusively on the physical features of the handwritten book. These are useful definitions but as summarised here they are too simplified. Indeed, there are often more things to be learned from a manuscript volume than the philological aspects of the text which is contained in it. One cannot, however, make such a simple schematic distinction between immaterial text and physical manuscript, between soul and body, so to speak. There is always an interaction between the two aspects, as is illustrated by, for example, the occurrence of a great variety of indications of personal use that can be found in many manuscripts. Each manuscript is, of course, a personally made artefact and contains information — always implicitly and sometimes explicitly — on the maker and sometimes on the user of the manuscript as well. On the whole, features such as the colophon, copyist's verses, owner's marks and reader's certificates enable us to gain an idea of the functioning of a certain text in general and the use of a certain manuscript volume in particular. Therefore, the study of these features, which belongs to the field of codicology as much as the study of writing materials and script are part of it, gives a text an extra dimension and places it in its cultural context. Only this overall and integrated approach to the manuscript does justice to its features in coherence with one another. It is philology in the widest sense of the word, involving all these aspects and also the interaction between the text and the environment in which it was launched.

The ḥāṣa, or copies of them, added at the end of a text or written on the title page preceding the text for which the authorisation is granted. Sometimes the ḥāṣa consists of a few lines only but sometimes they can be quite elaborate. They may be combined with readers' certificates. To add ḥāṣa to texts was a time honoured practice in Arabic manuscripts which remained in use for a number of centuries. By looking at the manuscripts in which they are written, one can gain an idea of how this system of authorisation to teach operated. In addition to this, an ḥāṣa can reveal much about the way a certain text or manuscript was used. Quite surprisingly, as yet very little has been done by way of a systematic collection of the data contained in the ḥāṣa in Arabic manuscripts.14 A corpus of such texts with an analysis of both their formulaic peculiarities and their content would be highly desirable. The fact that such a corpus would indeed be useful is illustrated by the discovery by Ebied and Young of the etymology of the term "baccalaureate": by scrutinising the Arabic wording of the ḥāṣa in a number of manuscripts they found evidence for their thesis that the well known European academic term is in fact derived from the Arabic term bihaust al-rīwyāt.15

Examples of some important ḥāṣa

The ḥāṣa originated within the Islamic educational system in which the Islamic religious sciences were taught. Its use, however, has by no means remained restricted to that field. Of the 72 manuscripts listed by Vajda, 59 have a "traditional Islamic" content, that is disciplines that are part of the madrasa curriculum, whereas 13 do not have a directly religious content but deal with such topics as medicine, literature and the sciences. This is still a high proportion in view of the fact that there are so many more manuscripts of the first category. Vajda's geographical register reveals that Damascus and Cairo are the places from where most manuscripts with ḥāṣa on them originate. Baghdad, Isfahān and Aleppo are the runners up as places where ḥāṣa were most frequently issued. Most other places are also situated in the Mashreq. Eighty percent of Vajda's corpus dates from the 6th/12th-15th centuries, with a more or less even distribution over this period.16

One of the most outstanding sets of ḥāṣa is found not in an Islamic scholarly text, but in what is probably the most prestigious text of Arabic imaginative literature, the Maqāmāt of

14 MacKaye's extensive analysis of the ḥāṣa in MS Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, Adab 105 (see n. 1 above), which contains a contemporary copy of the Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī (d. 512/1122), makes ample reference to secondary manuscripts and is exemplary both in this respect and from the methodological point of view. Vajda's collection of certificates (see n. 1 above) also provides a wealth of information.

15 See Vajda, Certificates de lecture, 65-6.

al-Ḥarīrī. This becomes clear from the ijażāt found on the authoritative manuscript of the text, copied from al-Ḥarīrī’s own copy. In the principal and contemporaneous īḏaṣa on this manuscript the names of some 38 scholars, a number of whom are identified as distinguished notables of Baghdad, are mentioned as having been present at the reading of the entire work, which took more than a month of intermittent sessions to complete.17

MacKay’s meticulous analysis of the numerous ijażāt in this manuscript has, in fact, reconstructed a period of almost two centuries of cultural life in Baghdad, Aleppo and Damascus. It all started in Baghdad in the year 504/1111, when the first reading of a copy of the author’s autograph took place. That reading was followed by a number of subsequent readings, all in Baghdad. In the 60 or so years since the first reading, the manuscript had become quite heavy with samā’ notes. After a period of 40 years, which remains unaccounted for, it came into the possession of the Aleppan historian Kānāl al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿAḏirīm (d. 660/1262). The manuscript then remained for more than 30 years in Aleppo, and bears numerous names of members of the best Aleppan families as auditors at sessions at which the manuscript was read. Finally, the manuscript bears certificates of readings sessions held in Damascus in the course of the year 683/1284. The manuscript then fades from view until, almost exactly six centuries later, it was acquired in 1875 by Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyya, where it still is.

When one looks at the more than 200 names of those involved in reading and listening to the manuscript, one is struck by the fact that many of them are related by family ties. The history of the transmission of the text in this manuscript often goes hand in hand with the history of generations of scholars and literary men who occupied themselves with it.

One of the earliest known ijażāt is that found in the unique manuscript of al-Nāṣīkh wa-l-mansūkh fi al-Qur’ān by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām (d. 223/837).18 Here we do indeed have a work which belongs to the core of Islamic sciences, the knowledge of the abrogating and abrogated verses of the Qur’an. The earliest samā’ in it dates from 392/1001-2, while the latest dates from 587/1191. In one of samā’ in this manuscript a place is mentioned: al-Jāmī’ al-Afīq bi-Misr.19 Here, too, several members of the same family are mentioned, including a father, his sons, and several brothers. Just as in the previously mentioned example of al-Ḥarīrī’s Maqāmah, it becomes clear that transmitting a text was a social event and sometimes also a family affair. In either case the personal element is clearly present. Comparison of the ijażāt at the end of the Istanbul manuscript of Abū ʿUbayd’s al-Nāṣīkh wa-l-mansūkh with the list of tiwāyāt on the title page of another Istanbul manuscript, the Kūtb al-Muqālasa by Abū Bakr al-Dinawarī,20 reveals the occurrence of the same person in both manuscripts, namely, the otherwise unknown scholar Abū ʿAbd Allāh M. b. Hamd b. Ḥāmid b. Muḥarrar b. Ghiyāth al-Ṭattājī. In the very old manuscript of Abū ʿUbayd’s al-Nāṣīkh wa-l-mansūkh, he is active as musmī’ in 587/1191, while in the copy of al-Dinawarī’s Kūtb al-Muqālasa, copied in 671/1272, he is one of the transmitters of the text preceding the manufacture of the manuscript. This shows that it is rewarding to accumulate the data of ijażāt, samā’, tiwāyāt and the like, with the present example, for instance, revealing the beginning of a scholarly network.

The ijażāt given by Ibn al-Jawāṭī (d. 539/1144), one of the foremost philologists in Baghdad,21 can be found in a number of manuscripts. A manuscript in Dublin contains on its title page a certificate of reading signed by Ibn al-Jawāṭī in 514/1120.22 A


This must be the manuscript to which Salīḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjīd refers ("ĳażāt al-samā’", 233, n. 1). The date which he gives there, 372 AH, is apparently a misreading for the clearly written date of 392 AH.


21 See C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, I (Weimar, 1898), 280.

22 Chester Beatty Library, No. 3009 (Arberry, *Handlist*, I, plate 1). See also S. A. Bonebakker, "Notes on Some Old Manuscripts of the Adab al-Khāṭīb of Ibn Qutayba, the Kūtb as-sīnā’ayn of Abū Ḥāmid al-ʾAskārī and the Matbāḥ as-sābir of Divān ab-Dīn ibn al-ʾAdīrī", *Orion*, XII-XIV (1960-
Leiden manuscript containing Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī’s *Luzūmān mā lä yalzam* was copied by Ibn al-Jawālīqī before 496/1102-3. His handwriting is easily identified and the date can be established from an autograph note by his teacher and predecessor at the Nizámīyya school in Baghdad, al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī (d. 502/1108). Other reading notes in the same manuscript reveal the reading by a pupil, Ibn al-Khāshābih, in the course of the year 519/1125. The manuscript then travelled from Baghdad to Cairo, as is borne out by notes about its new owner, the grammarian Ibn al-Nahlās (d. 698/1299). Another Leiden manuscript containing the philological work *Kitāb al-ʿAffāz* by ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. ʿIsā al-Hamadānī (d. 320/932), was copied in 522/1128. It, too, contains an autograph *qiraʿ* note by Ibn al-Jawālīqī on the title page. The manuscript itself contains notes of *bulāgh* and *muqābala* at fairly regular intervals and from these the length of the reading sessions can be approximately measured, each probably lasting around one or two hours. A late copy (11th/12th century?) of a *qiraʿ* note by Ibn al-Jawālīqī, dated Șāfār 501/1107, is available in MS Leiden Or. 403, f. 430b, which contains the *Diwān* of Abū Tammām with a commentary by al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī. The impression one gets from Ibn al-Jawālīqī’s notes is that his transmissions were probably not as much of a social event as were the previous cases. It would appear that he had a predilection for a smaller group to whom he taught the important texts of his time. His copy of al-Maʿarrī’s *Luzūmīyyat* with only his teacher al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī between the author and himself, is an eloquent witness of this.

1. 159-94. The note in the Dublin manuscript is edited by Bonebakker on p. 165.
3. The *qiraʿ* note was published by me in *Seven Specimens of Arabic Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1978), 11.
5. MS Leiden Or. 1070 (F. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Collections in the Netherlands* [Leiden, 1957], 10).

Conclusions and perspectives

Two aspects of the *ijāzāt* have been dealt with, one from the point of view of cultural history, the other with codicological considerations taken into account. Both are necessary and the two complement one another by interaction. The *ijāzāt* itself is a good example for proving that these two orientations cannot be isolated from one another. The *ijāzāt* is an important source for the history of scholarly and cultural networks and gives the details by which an entire cultural environment can be reconstructed.

The *ijāzāt* as a mechanism in the distribution of learning deserves to be studied on a much wider scale than has hitherto been the case. Librarians should collect the *ijāzāt* in their manuscripts and publish them. Such publications should not only consist of an analysis of the data of the certificates, as Vajda and MacKay have done, but should also contain as complete a transcript as possible of the Arabic texts themselves. Only then can the most important work begin, namely, the compilation of a cumulative index of all the bio-bibliographical information contained in such certificates, which would be a valuable addition to existing bio-bibliographical reference works. The publication of a large corpus of *ijāzāt* will enable us to make a survey of the technical terminology employed which, in turn, will deepen our knowledge of the function of the *ijāzāt* in Arabic manuscripts.

The minimal requirements for such a corpus are, firstly, the full texts, with good photographs, of a great number of *ijāzāt*. These would constitute the main body of the work. Secondly, such a corpus should also contain a number of research aids: summary descriptions of the manuscripts in question, an index of persons with their functions in the process of the issuing of the *ijāzāt*, an index of the places to where the manuscripts in which the *ijāzāt* are found peregrinated in the course of time, and a glossary of the technical terminology employed.

This is not an easy task to perform, since the scholarly certificates are often written in the least legible of scripts. The study of the *ijāzāt* will only be fruitful if the student of the *ijāzāt* is well acquainted with the formal requirements of these certificates28 and the educational environment from which they stem, and if at the same time he has a wide experience in working with manuscripts. In the ongoing development towards an increased

28 As sketched by Ṣāliḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, “*ijāzāt al-samāʿ*”, 234-41.
professionalisation of the science of manuscripts, it is only natural that such a corpus of *ijāzāt* should be compiled by a professional codicologist.

MĀLIKĪ FORMULARIES AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS: CHANGES IN THE MANUSCRIPT CULTURE OF THE *'UDUL* (PROFESSIONAL WITNESSES) IN MOROCCO

LÉON BUSKENS

The underlying theme of this short introductory paper¹ is the relationship between codicology on the one hand and the study of culture and society on the other: the physical appearance of books and documents is an important source of knowledge about culture and society, while the study of culture and society is an important help in understanding book-culture.

With this general proposition in mind, my aim is to analyse changes in the book-culture of the *'udul*, professional witnesses or notaries, in Morocco, from the medieval period (understood in a broad sense) to the present day, focusing on three types of material: formularies, registers, and legal documents.

Some general remarks on written proof and notaries in Islamic law

Although official legal doctrine did not permit the use of written documents as a means of proof of legal rights and obligations, written documents played an important role in the practice of Islamic law from an early period onwards. The use of documents led to the emergence of professional qualified witnesses, *shuhūd* or *'udul*, and the science of legal deeds, *'ilm al-shurūt* or *'ilm al-wathā'iq*.²

¹ Severe restrictions of time have not allowed me to develop this paper beyond the broad outlines presented herein. A fuller version of my findings is, however, planned for the near future.

² Further information is to be found in: Emile Tyan, *Le notariat et le régime de la preuve par écrit dans la pratique du droit musulman*.
Especially in Islamic Spain and in the Maghreb, scholarship on the art of drawing up legal deeds flourished. While in other parts of the Islamic world this scholarship and the activities of Muslim notaries vanished in the course of time, in Morocco this venerable tradition is still very much alive today. The widespread use of legal deeds makes these documents a valuable historical source, as has been shown by the studies of Muhammad al-Manunī3 and others.

'UDUL AND WATHĀ’IQ IN MEDIEVAL MOROCCO (UNTIL 1912)

Legal status

In theory law was to be found in the scholarly law-books, the works of Mālikī fiqh. Use of written means of proof was accepted by Moroccan legal scholars, as is shown by their discussion of the use of documents. Even prominent and pious scholars contributed to the use of written documents by writing learned treatises about them and by acting as notaries themselves. The nexus between the judges and the 'udul was also shown by the physical nearness of the notarial offices to the courts.

The importance of legal documents in daily life is also shown by the products of Jewish notaries, sofrim, which resemble Islamic deeds in physical appearance.

Formularies

The medieval, pre-colonial period is characterised by an enormous diversity in the manuals used by 'udul to serve as a model for their documents. This diversity existed in time as well


3 e.g. Muhammad al-Manunī, Wathāʿiq wa-nuṣūṣ 'an Abī al-Ḥasan 'Ašūr b. Māsum wa-dharrīṣiyatīhi (Rabat, 1396/1976).

as in space. Each period and each region had its own formularies, adapted to specific local circumstances and needs. Some of these formularies were written by well-known and respected scholars, such as al-Wansariṣī.

The temporal diversity can be illustrated by the fact that the title al-Wathāʿiq al-fāṣīyya, a manual for the 'udul in Fez, refers to at least three different, successively composed formularies.4 The regional diversity shows itself through the existence of formularies named after a certain town or region, such as Taroudannt or the Sūs. A curious example of such regional diversity is the existence of a special glossary of Arabic and Berber meant for use by the 'udul of the Berber-speaking Sūs region of southern Morocco.5

Through the use of documents adapted to local circumstances, customary practices could be incorporated into Mālikī fiqh as developed by Moroccan scholars. Further research in this domain, such as for instance by connecting the study of fatwā-collections and handbooks on 'amāl with formularies from the same period and region, might be fruitful. The case of the shahādat al-lafīf, or collective testimony, would serve as an example of the incorporation of customary practice into Moroccan Mālikī fiqh by way of legal documents.6

Before the introduction of lithographic printing in the 1860s all formularies in use were handwritten. After this date some important manuals were published in lithograph form. In recent years the study of the development of the 'ilm al-wathāʿiq literature in Morocco has been given an important stimulus by the activities of Mostapha Naji of the Maktatab Dar al-Turāth in Rabat who has edited and/or published several medieval formularies.7

7 e.g. al-Qadī Abī ʿIṣḥāq al-Ghanīṣī, al-Wathāʿiq al-mukhtasarā, ed. Mostapha Naji (Rabat, 1988); Abī ʿAbdallāh Muhammad al-Masūdī, al-Wathāʿiq al-Sijīhāṣiyūya, ed. Mostapha Naji (Rabat, 1988); also the works mentioned in nos. 3 and 4 above.
Registers

In principle documents were only drawn up as an original. No copies or registers were kept, or at least this was not obligatory. Some 'udāl preserved their notes for private use, as is shown by the survival of such private notebooks.

Documents

A variety of materials were in use, such as parchment, paper and wood. The general layout of the documents seems to have been fixed from an early age onwards: broad margins on the right-hand side of the document and no margins on the left, so as to avoid the insertion of text afterwards. These documents do not yet show any signs of standardisation through the use of special paper and/or references to registers. An important aspect is the khīṭāb, or homologation, which shows that the document has been accepted by the judge as a means to establish legal proof.

THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE (1912-1956)

Legal status

One of the first important developments in the legal domain after the establishment of the French protectorate in 1912 was the codification of important parts of Moroccan law according to the French model. This resulted in a dual system in which French and Moroccan, Islamic law existed alongside each other. At the same time it meant the beginning of the incorporation of the Islamic institution of professional witnesses into a newly created system of French-style state law. This is clearly shown in the codification of the law of contracts of 1913 in the Dahir formant code des Obligations et Contrats. Article 418 of this code accepts documents drawn up by 'udāl according to the classical procedure of homologation by the judge as a means of establishing legal proof. In 1925 the French institution of the notaire public was officially established alongside the Islamic 'adil.

The gradual incorporation of the 'udāl into the new state law required important changes in the legal status of the 'udāl as well as in their material culture. State supervision and regulation of the institution increased, this being partly connected to the fact that the activities of the 'udāl in transactions involving real estate were used to levy taxes. In the course of time the appointment of the 'udāl became the responsibility of the Department of Justice instead of the local judge.

Formularies

The French did not directly interfere with the diversity of formularies in use at the time. However, the new regulations concerning the use of stamped paper and other changes in the physical appearance of documents were spread by the Department of Justice in the form of printed circulars. The 'udāl were also made acquainted with print-culture and its new, "rationalised" layout through the first formularies printed by movable type in Morocco. Print-culture was further stimulated by the introduction of legal journals, which published legal texts in Arabic as well as in French translation in an entirely new layout.

 Registers

A series of regulations introduced by the French made it compulsory to the use of registers of deeds drawn up by 'udāl. The form of these registers became standardised, consisting of copybooks with pre-printed columns in which all kinds of information had to be filled in. The introduction of these uniform procedures and registers enabled the central government to get a firmer grip on the daily life of its subjects and on local legal practice.

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Documents

The new regulations, aimed at centralised control, show themselves clearly in the physical appearance of the legal documents produced by the 'udāl. The use of stamped paper becomes obligatory. In the margins of the documents references to registration in registers, indicated by the use of numbers, appear. In some cases stamps referring to the additional registration on the transfer of real estate are visible, and judges use stamps of their signature on a larger scale.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE (FROM 1956 ONWARDS)

Legal status

After independence the French legal reforms are in general retained. The dual system of French and Islamic law is gradually transformed into a unified system which is strongly influenced by French law. There are only two fields in which Islamic law is transformed into a legal code: family law and the rules concerning evidence.

In the 1958 codification of Mālikī family law, the Mudawwana  al-abwāl al-shaksiyya, the 'udāl was assigned a vital role in the field of marriage, repudiation, filiation and inheritance. This role was further strengthened in the 1993 reforms of the Mudawwana.

In the field of evidence the general dispositions of the protectorate were taken over and developed. Muslim and French notaries now exist alongside each other. However, the competence of the 'udāl in the transmission of real estate was enlarged. The tendencies of uniformisation, standardisation, and of state control, were also strengthened. The present rules, laid down in a law of 1982 and a decree of the prime minister of 1983, guarantee a large degree of control of the 'udāl by setting specific rules for their selection, education, and appointment, as well as for the constant supervision of their activities, and also for the use of registers.9

Formularies

As a follow up to the codification of Islamic family law in the Mudawwana, an official formulary for documents connected with the law of personal status was composed by al-ʻĪraqī in 1961. Its explicit aim is to offer a clear-cut standard to the 'udāl in the drawing-up of legal documents and to impose a uniformity to local practice in accordance with the recently codified national law. The book, which was officially approved by the Minister of Justice, has been continually in print, as far as I know, since 1961. In the course of time only the design of the cover has been adapted to modern taste.10

Registers

The obligation to use registers was confirmed and extended by the new rules of 1982 and 1983. Nowadays a personal register as well as copybook kept at the court are in use. The most recent reforms in the rules concerning the 'udāl have further elaborated the prescriptions concerning the keeping of registers. According to some practitioners this has led to an unnecessary complication of procedure, as well as to the taking away of the jobs of some scribes who formerly assisted the 'udāl by copying the texts of the deeds by hand. In November 1993, resistance to these reforms grew so violent that the 'udāl in the traditional town of Meknes went on strike for a day.

Documents

The new regulations as well as the wider spread of Western-style print-culture show themselves in the documents produced by the 'udāl. Gradually printed forms have come into use. These are headed by texts such as “The Kingdom of Morocco” and the name of the place of the court in which the 'udāl are working. In the right-hand margin rubrics for the filling in of references to the registers are printed.

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Some 'udil have gradually given up the use of their typical handwriting and shifted to the use of a typewriter instead. Similarly, many judges now no longer write the homologation formula by hand but use a rubber stamp instead.

CONCLUSION

Study of the physical appearance of the formularies, registers and legal documents used and produced by the 'udil show an increasing uniformisation and standardisation of their activities and procedures. In the formularies these tendencies become manifest in the transition from manuscript via lithographed to printed books. The introduction of the obligatory use of registers, which have become more and more uniform in layout in the course of time, offers an example of standardisation. The physical appearance of legal documents has also drastically changed during this century. The introduction of stamps, stamped paper, coded references to registers, and in recent times even printed forms, are also indications of the afore-mentioned tendencies.

To understand these changes in the material culture of the 'udil, we have to consider their written products in the context of larger political processes, notably the formation of a modern nation state in Morocco. Uniformisation and standardisation of their activities is closely connected with a stronger control of the legal system by the central government. Part of the process of state formation is the emerging need of, as well as the possibility for, the central government to control the daily life of its subjects. The legal system, especially the domain of establishing proof of rights and obligations, is an important means to exercise this state control of private life. In the course of the 20th century the Islamic institution of qualified professional witnesses has been incorporated into the newly created system of state law, which has been fundamentally influenced by French law. The introduction of movable type printing and Western-style layout in the domain of legal writing is intimately connected with the rise of the modern, centrally controlled nation state.

By discussing this particular case I have tried to substantiate my initial proposition that the study of the physical aspects of books and documents is an important source for social history, as well as the idea that codicology can profit from paying attention to the context in which the objects under study were produced and used. The study of books and manuscripts leads us inevitably to the study of the men and women who wrote, read and used those books and manuscripts.